

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

ACCOMMODATION OR CONFRONTATION?

SOME RESPONSES TO THE EISELEN COMMISSION REPORT
AND THE BANTU EDUCATION ACT
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA

A dissertation
presented in fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Education

by

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken at a time when South African politicians and educators are facing the challenge of a major restructuring of the education system, and at a time when the the Methodist Church of South Africa is being encouraged, by some, to become more involved in the provision of education again.

It focusses on the three events - the appointment of the 'Commission of Inquiry into Native Education' (usually referred to as the Eiselen Commission), the Report of that Commission, and the Bantu Education Act of 1954 - which led to the introduction of the system of Bantu Education in 1955. Consideration is given to the responses of various 'liberal' and 'radical' groups to those events.

African education had been pioneered by a number of Christian churches in South Africa in the nineteenth century, and over a period of one hundred years there was significant growth in the numbers of students attending schools, and in the range of education offered. By 1950, qualified teachers at most mission schools were paid by the State, but the churches were still responsible for the provision and maintenance of premises, and for the administration of the schools.

The apartheid platform on which the Nationalist Government came to power in 1948 led to the introduction of legislation across a broad front to ensure that 'black' and 'white' South Africans moved apart and 'developed along their own lines'. The Bantu Education Act was one of those laws. It required the churches either to transfer all mission schools to State control, or to forfeit their subsidies: the 'undesirable' influence of the churches was to be removed from education entirely.

The responses of the 'liberal' and 'radical' organizations to that challenge have been characterized in this study as being those of 'accommodation' or 'confrontation'. The 'liberals' - including the churches - voiced their opposition to the proposals, but then looked for what could be described as 'good' in them, arguing that they could not defy the Government and close their schools, since such an action would have deprived thousands of children of schooling altogether. The 'radicals' found the underlying philosophy of Bantu Education totally unacceptable, and urged teachers and parents to oppose the implementation of the new system in every way they could.

Three aspects of the Methodist Church reactions to the proposals have been highlighted. Firstly, it is clear that the Church had always been hampered in its educational work by a lack of funds. The threat by the State to withdraw State subsidies from the mission schools if the Church refused to hand over its schools,

could not be taken lightly. In the final analysis, the financial issue overshadowed all other considerations. Secondly it is also clear that the decision-making bodies in the Church at that time were dominated by 'white' members, and that little serious attention was apparently given to those 'black' members who favoured confrontation. Thirdly, the Methodist Church had never developed a coherent philosophy of education, or entrusted the control of its schools to educationists. The leaders who had to take the final decisions on the future of the mission schools were, on the whole, not education specialists, but ministers charged with the oversight of Methodist schools.

As the Methodist leadership is considering ways in which the Church can respond to the present education crisis, cognisance could well be taken of the problems which the Church faced in the Fifties. A re-entry into the formal education structures may not be the most creative way of responding to the situation today.

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PREFACE

Forty years ago, the Methodist Church of South Africa, in common with a number of other major Christian denominations, was heavily committed to the cause of African education. Five years later, all the schools which had fallen under the control and supervision of the Methodist Church had been, or were in the process of being, handed over to the State. During those five years, the groundwork was laid for the implementation of the system of Bantu Education. Today strong criticism is still directed at the churches from some quarters for the way in which they responded to the events of those five years, and came to the decisions which had such far-reaching consequences.

In this study, consideration has been given to the responses of the Methodist Church leadership, and the more radical 'black' Teachers' Organizations, to the challenges of the early Fifties. It is hoped that the information recorded may be of some value as the Church leadership of the Nineties is faced with new challenges in the field of education.

The bulk of my research has been done at the South African Library in Cape Town, the libraries of the University of Cape Town, and in the Methodist Archives in the Cory Library at Rhodes University, Grahamstown. Some archival material has not yet been transferred to

the Cory Library, and so it was also necessary for me to consult material in the South-Western Transvaal District Office in Johannesburg. The Minutes of the meetings of the Board of African Education are in the possession of the present Convenor of the Board of Education, the Rev Jack Scholtz. I also had the opportunity of consulting one box of Methodist Missionary Society records in the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

One of the major problems I have encountered has been the fact that so many records - correspondence, minutes of meetings, circulars, etc - have not been preserved: many Methodists seem to have had little awareness of the need to keep such records for future research. In addition, many of the records of the schools and Institutions which were taken over by the State were never removed at that time, and have disappeared completely.¹ Now researchers are faced with an almost impossible task as they try to piece together the story of some of the Institutions.

I have had little success in drawing personal recollections from people who were involved in education in the early Fifties. Interviews with some people known to me have yielded interesting comments and information, but letters have on the whole gone unanswered. Whether this is because the majority of people approached no longer

1. The Buntingville records were inadvertently discovered by members of staff of the new school, and sent to the University of the Transkei (Information from Lynette Faragher, July 1990).

have any clear memories of the period, or because of the sensitive nature of the information being sought, I shall never know. Time and circumstances have made it impossible for me to visit those to whom I wrote.

In places, I have used the term 'English-speaking churches': this has been taken to mean those churches in which English was the language of the Synods and Conferences, since it is clear that the majority of members of all these denominations were not English-speaking at all.

Anyone writing on South African faces a problem with the choice of terms particularly as they relate to the various 'race groups' which have for so long been differentiated in this country. Many designations which have been used over the years are now totally unacceptable to the majority of South Africans. Where it has been necessary to distinguish between the various 'race groups', I have adopted the following procedure: 'Black' is used in reference to all people who were not classified 'white' (i.e. 'African', 'coloured' and 'Asian'), while 'African' is used in its more restricted sense to refer to those regarded as being of 'black' African descent. 'Native' and 'Bantu' have only been used where the context of the discussion demanded it. The phrase Bantu Education has been used without quotes in reference to the particular brand of education which was imposed after

the passing of the Bantu Education Act, and to the philosophy which underwrote that Act.

In conclusion, I must express my thanks, not only to those who have provided information and insights about the events of the early Fifties, but also to those who have assisted me in my research: the staff of the South African Library, the UCT Libraries - and in particular those of the Manuscript and Archives Department - and the Cory Library in Grahamstown.

I am grateful for the insights and guidance provided by my supervisor, Professor Peter Kallaway - for the fact that he was able to point me to so many different resources as I struggled to make sense of an unwieldy mass of information, and for his incisive criticism and comments on the successive drafts of this work.

The financial assistance of the Institute for Research Development towards this research is also acknowledged. Opinions expressed in this work, or conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not to be attributed to the Institute for Research Development.

A final word of appreciation must go to my family, Allister, Heather and Michelle for their support, and to Heather, in particular, for her meticulous proof-reading of the final draft of this work.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	All African Convention
ANC	African National Congress
CAPA	Cape African Parents Association
CATA	Cape African Teachers' Association
CATU	Cape African Teachers' Union
CED	Cape Education Department
CNE	Christian National Education
IDAMASA	Interdenominational African Ministers Association of South Africa
MCSA	Methodist Church of South(ern) Africa
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NEUM	Non-European Unity Movement
OFS	Orange Free State
OFSATA	Orange Free State African Teachers' Association
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
TATA	Transvaal African Teachers' Association
TATU	Transvaal African Teachers' Union
TED	Transvaal Education Department
TEPA	Teachers' Educational and Professional Association
TLSA	Teachers' League of South Africa
UCATA	United Cape African Teachers' Association
UED	Union Education Department
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society

NOTE ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA

For those unfamiliar with the functioning of the Methodist Church, a brief description of the structures of the Church in the early Fifties may be helpful.

Individual churches, generally referred to as Societies, serving 'white' or 'black' Methodists separately, were grouped together to form racially exclusive Circuits; a number of Circuits comprised a District. In 1950 there were seven Districts in Southern Africa, and these Districts made up the Connexion. Each District held an annual Synod, to which each Circuit sent representatives, and in most Districts, separate 'European' (which included 'coloured' and Indian delegates) and 'African' Lay Representative Sessions of Synod were held. Representatives were nominated by each Synod to attend the Conference, which met in October each year. Each Synod elected a District Chairman (always a minister) who presided at the Synod, and was responsible for Church administration within the District: in addition he served a particular Society as resident minister. The Conference elected a President (also a minister) who held office for a period of one year at a time, but could be re-elected. The President also continued to serve his own Society while he was fulfilling the duties of President, although a junior minister was appointed to assist him during his year in office.

The appointment of all ministers to particular Societies had to be ratified by the Conference, and Societies were almost always served by ministers from their own 'race group', except where 'white' ministers were sent to the 'missions', or as Governors of educational Institutions.¹

Within the Districts, Education Committees were appointed by the Synods to handle matters pertaining to Church schools. At Connexional level, the Board of African Education, appointed by the Conference, was responsible for everything related to African education: in 1950, this Board comprised the President and Secretary of Conference, the Chairmen of the Districts, the Principals of fifteen educational Institutions, three additional ministers, and four African laymen. The Board usually met once a year in September. A separate Board of Education was appointed by the Conference to see to the affairs of the Connexional Schools. Three Connexional schools - Kingswood, Kearsney and Epworth² - catered exclusively for 'white' students, forming part of an elite group of 'private' schools in South Africa. At

1. The term Institution was used to describe a complex of schools, usually including a Teachers' Training School, a High or Secondary School, and a Primary Practising School.

2. The fourth - St Stithians - was opened in 1953.

Conference, 'European' and 'African' education reports were received separately, but all the high schools, colleges and Institutions had to submit annual reports to Conference.

Before 1933, when the various branches of the Methodist Church were united under a single South African Conference, the terms 'Methodist', 'Wesleyan' and 'Wesleyan Methodist' were all in use: 'Methodist' has been used throughout this work.

INTRODUCTION

1976 ... 1980 ... 1985 ... 1989 ... dates which are writ large in the history of 'black' education in South Africa. These were years in which the flashpoints in the ongoing education struggle occurred, years in which 'black' students sacrificed their education and their lives, as they protested against the inequities of the system of Bantu Education, a system devised in the early Fifties and described by Dr Verwoerd¹ as "... [having] its roots entirely in the Native areas and in the Native environment and Native community" (Senate. Debates, 1954: col 2618).

The introduction of Bantu Education as official policy marked the end of an era in African education. In 1954, most education for Africans was provided in mission schools, established under the auspices of the different Christian churches, but heavily subsidised by the State, and subject to extensive State control. After that date, the administration of nearly all the African church schools was transferred to the State, giving it full control over what was taught in those schools, how it was taught, and by whom.² The 'undesirable' influence of the churches was removed from the sphere of African

1. Minister of Native Affairs, and one of the chief architects of the policy of apartheid.

2. Although the Roman Catholic Church refused to comply with Government demands and chose to run its schools without a State subsidy, the schools still had to be registered by the State in order to continue to function, and Bantu Education curricula were implemented in all the schools.

education. No African child was in future to receive teaching or absorb ideas in school which were contrary to the philosophy of apartheid.

This study has concentrated on three crucial events leading to the introduction of Bantu Education, namely the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry into Native Education (generally known as the Eiselen Commission), the publication of the Report of that Commission, and the promulgation of the Bantu Education Act in 1954. Consideration has been given to the ways in which various individuals and groups reacted to those events, with special reference to the responses of the Methodist Church of South Africa (MCSA), and those of the more radical teachers' organizations.

Some Themes in the Story of Mission Education

Three significant themes have emerged as consideration has been given to the responses of various groups of people to those events. The most obvious has been the fact that there was never enough money available for education, and that the work of the churches was continually hampered on that score. Without exception, interviewees agreed that when the Methodist Church was faced with the threat of the withdrawal of State subsidies, it had no choice but to withdraw from African education and allow the State to take over the mission schools.

Secondly, the divided nature of that section of the South African population which was opposed to the Nationalist Government has emerged very clearly. This has been - somewhat hesitantly - described as the division between a 'white-dominated liberal group' and a group of 'black radicals'. The two groups responded in very different ways, and at different levels: the former concentrated on the mechanics of the proposals and registered formal protests against the recommendations, while the latter attacked the whole philosophy of Bantu Education and urged members to take action to stop its implementation. In the final analysis, neither succeeded in thwarting the Government in its determination to implement Bantu Education. The 'liberals' simply yielded to the pressures more quickly than the 'radicals' did.

The Methodist Church was itself a 'church divided' in those days when the balance of power lay with the 'liberals', while the bulk of the membership was 'black'.³ 'White' responses dominated the Church records: no evidence has been found of significant 'black' input to the debate on Bantu Education within Methodist Church circles. The 'white' leadership appeared to be selective in deciding which 'black' ministers or laypeople could be regarded as 'responsible' (and thus acceptable spokespersons for 'black'

3. The membership records for 1950 show that of a total membership of 248 410, 210 349 - approximately 85% - were 'black' (Conference. Minutes, 1950:23).

Methodists), and which as 'troublemakers'. The opinions of the latter were given no credence in the courts of the Church.

A third recurring theme has been the failure of the Church leadership to come to grips with the basic educational issues involved in the recommendations of the Eiselen Report and the Bantu Education Act. This can be seen clearly in the responses formulated by the Conference, to proposals concerning Christian National Education (CNE) and Bantu Education⁴: the underlying implications of those policies were overlooked completely. Concern over the loss of control over mission schools focussed more on the loss to the Church of a significant area of evangelical outreach, than on the educationally unsound principles of Bantu Education. The decisions, recorded in Chapter 7, on the handing over of the schools to the Government were taken by a Conference not primarily concerned about educational matters at all. That Conference was guided in its decision-making by the Board of African Education, members of which were ministers and laypeople involved in African education. Very few of them, however, were qualified teachers: the majority were ministers who had been appointed by the Church to serve as Governors of the various educational Institutions.

Two South African academics with roots in the Methodist

4. See Appendix C and Appendix E.

Church have published works in which the Protestant Churches are subjected to critical analysis. In Servants of Power, James Cochrane focussed on the role of the churches in South Africa during the years 1903-1930, and one of his points of emphasis is that the churches during that period failed to be "critically and self-critically aware" of the implications of their responses to various political, social and economic situations (Cochrane, 1987:84, 86). His comment on the churches' inability to respond to economic challenges is also true of the educational challenges:

...the real weakness lay in the Churches' own internal life. They were white-dominated on the one hand, and whites in the Church at all levels kept themselves at a considerable distance from blacks. Thus despite its large black membership, its sometimes liberal clergy, and a handful of educated blacks who were respected, the Church did not have within itself structures suitable for effectively hearing, let alone understanding, the multiple voices of the oppressed (Cochrane, 1987:156).

The failure on the part of the church leadership to engage in "critical and self-critical" thinking on the education issue is apparent in many of the responses quoted in this study. On a number of occasions significant questions were posed by individuals, but apparently never followed up by the decision-makers.

Charles Villa-Vicencio, in his book Trapped in Apartheid, commented on the Bantu Education Act, in a chapter entitled 'Protest without Resistance'. He described the churches at that time as being "trapped

within their own history ... predisposed to cautious compromise" (Villa-Vicencio, 1988:102). The Methodist Church was a product of the British Colonial period, in which 'black' and 'white' related to each other in 'accepted' ways, listened politely to each others' viewpoints on appropriate occasions, and accepted that 'white' interests always took precedence over 'black' interests.

By the Fifties, many Methodists, both 'black' and 'white', were uncomfortable with the demands being made by the more radical African Nationalists, who were seen to be becoming increasingly 'pushy' and 'cheeky' and to be stirring up 'trouble'. As mentioned earlier, the Methodist response to Bantu Education was largely the product of 'white' thinking and experience: the Methodist Church had not yet learnt - or been challenged - to become what Linden in his study of the Roman Catholic Church in Zimbabwe described as a "listening church, responsive to African opinion" (Linden, 1980:74).

Although the points raised by Cochrane and Villa-Vicencio have not been pursued to any extent in this study, they do provide some useful insights into the way the churches responded to the challenges they faced in the years between 1949 and 1955.

The Methodist Church of South Africa and the Teachers' Associations: Differences in Approach and Emphasis

One of the dangers inherent in any study such as this is the temptation to interpret the events of a particular period in the light of contemporary insights and thinking. The Methodist Church of the early Fifties was rooted in the social, political and economic climate of that period: it was guided by leaders who, in large measure, accepted the existing status quo, and were seldom challenged in those assumptions by clergy or laypeople, either 'black' or 'white'. Delegates from the MCSA attended various national and international church conferences, where they met representatives from other major denominations, including the Afrikaans churches. Such contacts kept Methodists in touch with developments in Christian thinking locally and around the world, but it is not clear to what degree this influenced their attitudes to what was happening inside their own country. On some occasions there is clear evidence of defensiveness about interference from 'outsiders who did not really understand the South African situation.'

This was the era before the Cottlesloe Conference⁵, the

5. A "consultation on Christian race relations and social problems in South Africa", held in December 1960, and attended by delegates from the World Council of Churches (WCC) and eight South African denominations. The Statement prepared by the Consultation rejected all unjust discrimination and urged equal responsibilities and equal privileges for all South Africans. The Afrikaans church synods rejected the Statement, and subsequently withdrew from the WCC.

declaration by the MCSA and other denominations that apartheid was a heresy⁶, the days of Black Consciousness and Liberation Theology, and the establishment of the Black Methodist Consultation (BMC).⁷ Not only the Methodist Church, but all the major denominations in South Africa, were led by 'white' Christians who still accepted the concept of 'trusteeship' as a guiding principle in their relationship with their 'black' members. On numerous occasions in the MCSA records one finds the phrase 'our African people': it would seem that its use was never challenged publically by 'black' members.

The mandate of the churches has always involved far more than the provision of secular education for their members. African education was a relatively minor item on the agenda of most Synods and Conferences. The schools were important to the Church because they provided a way of spreading the Gospel, and of drawing new members into the Methodist Church, but it appears that the concern of the Church for its 'black' schools may have been more in the realm of 'mission' than of 'education.' Some of the statements recorded in Chapter 7 seem to support this contention. Clear distinctions were certainly drawn between 'mission schools' and 'Connexional schools': at the latter (for 'white' students), much stress was laid on the upholding of standards and traditions, and the

6. The MCSA declaration on apartheid as a heresy was first made at the 1982 Conference (Conference. Minutes, 1982:231).

7. Established in 1976 by a group of ministers who believed that 'black' issues were not being taken seriously by the Church leadership.

provision of first-class buildings and facilities.

The church by its very nature is a diverse community of people who believe in Jesus Christ: one would expect, therefore, to find represented within that community a cross-section of political views, whether these views are given any overt expression in the courts of the church or not. Church members would certainly have been found all along the "accommodation-confrontation" spectrum. It is important to remember that, although the churches issued official statements through their conferences and other bodies, there were nevertheless many within the churches whose personal viewpoints were at variance with the official one.

The broad-based membership of the MCSA must also be borne in mind in any comparison of Church and teachers' association responses. Members of the Church ranged in outlook from arch-conservative to fiery radical: the structures and functioning of the MCSA were such that people from right across that spectrum could be elected as delegates to both Synods and Conferences. In theory, virtually every viewpoint on a particular topic could be heard at those gatherings, and the leadership was faced with the almost impossible task of bringing matters to an acceptable conclusion.

By contrast, the three teachers' associations under consideration were, by their very nature, able to

concentrate their attention on educational issues. In addition, each of them had shed, or was in the process of shedding, its conservative members during the early Fifties. The Teachers' Educational and Professional Association (TEPA) broke away from the Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA) in 1944, the Transvaal African Teachers' Union (TATU) from the Transvaal African Teachers' Association (TATA) in 1950, and the Cape African Teachers' Union (CATU) from the Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA) in 1953. The result was that the organizations which came out most strongly in opposition to Eiselen and to Bantu Education, were able to achieve a reasonable degree of unanimity among their members, and were also well-informed on educational matters.

Statements on and Critiques of Mission Education

There is a considerable quantity of primary resource material on mission education available to researchers: this includes reports sent 'home' by missionaries to keep their Missionary Societies and their funders informed on progress being made on the mission field; reports to Synods and Conferences from the different mission stations; and published accounts written by the missionaries themselves, or by travellers who visited various

mission stations and reported on the work being done there. Such accounts, biased as they are in favour of the missionaries, and for the most part uncritical of the work they were doing, nevertheless provide a useful record of the churches' contribution to African education.

Some information can also be gleaned from various official reports of Superintendents-General of Education and Inspectors of the different education departments, from evidence submitted to Government Commissions appointed to investigate African education in particular, or African affairs in general⁸, and from the religious press.

African views on mission education were recorded in addresses of leaders to various conferences, in the journals of the African teachers' associations, and in the religious and secular press as well. These were often critical of the missionaries and the churches, although some leaders did acknowledge the contribution which the churches had made to educating Africans, at considerable cost to themselves, and in the face of much 'white' opposition to the idea of African education.

8. For example: 1903-1905 S A Native Affairs Commission; 1908 Select Commission on Native Education; 1910-1912 Fremantle Commission; 1930-1932 Native Economic Commission Report; and 1936 Committee on Native Education (Welsh Committee).

As early as 1920, Mr (later Prof) D D T Jabavu⁹, in an address to the Natal Missionary Conference, paid tribute to the past work of the missionaries, but expressed dismay at the "new spirit which had crept in", where missionaries "adopt a socially distant attitude of master to servant" in their contact with Africans (Karis & Carter, 1972:123).

Contributions to Good Shepherd¹⁰ and Teachers' Vision¹¹ also indicated a growing frustration among teachers, from the late Thirties onwards, with the inadequacies of mission education:

We do not blame the missionaries entirely. They have had their successes and failures. We have cause to bless and thank them, and we have cause as well to blame them. Native Education, as such, has outgrown their management in the same way as a lad outgrows a suit of clothes (Editor E M J Phago in Good Shepherd, March 1941:7).

Granted the missionary has done more than anybody else to benefit the cause of Native education, like the Moses of old, he has led us out of the 'house of illiteracy', but why is he unwilling to lead us right into the Promised Land? ... the missionaries should have led the country in giving higher grade positions to Natives (Anonymous response to the 1939 Report of the Superintendent General of Education in Teachers' Vision 6(2), 1939:27).

An increased awareness of the political implications of education was evident in several comments published in

9. Prominent Methodist layman and lecturer in Latin and Vernacular Languages at the South African Native College, Fort Hare. See Appendix B.

10. Journal of TATA, published from 1923-1956.

11. Journal of CATA, formerly The CATA, published from 1934-1956.

the same journals. Mr W M Tsotsi¹², writing at the time of the establishment of the United Cape African Teachers' Association, noted:

It is surprising how many African teachers seem unaware that we are engaged in a life and death struggle ... Too many of us are content to take the difficulties which confront Native Education individually, as they come, little realizing that they fit into one pattern i.e. the determination of the dominant European group to keep Africans in eternal servitude (Teachers' Vision 9(1), 1942:25).

CATA began to adopt a more aggressive stance after 1944 when the question of affiliation to either the ANC or the AAC was first raised. The question of the struggle for equal rights surfaced regularly:

The struggle for better educational facilities is inseparably bound up with the struggle for full democratic rights. Teachers must become politically minded; they have no choice in the matter if they are at all serious about their profession ('Vuy-Vuyi' in Teachers' Vision 11(1), 1944:19).

The chief aim of all education is to give knowledge to the child whether he is black or white or even green for that matter ... If we accept any other aim, we shall be automatically accepting inferiority and we shall ever be relegated to inferior positions consistent with our form of education (N Honono¹³ in Teachers' Vision, 11(2), 1944:20-23).

On the question of the new African teachers' salary scales, Honono, then editor of Teachers' Vision, commented:

12. Later President of the AAC.

13. Prominent Methodist layman in the Forties and Fifties. See Appendix B.

We want nothing short of complete uniformity of conditions of service for all teachers regardless of colour, we demand the same rights as Europeans in all branches of education, we want the same curricula, the same categories and scales as Europeans, we want government schools, equality of opportunity and we are prepared to fight hard for the attainment of the above (Teachers' Vision 13(2), 1947:5).

Three people delegated to draw up a statement on CATA policy, C M Mayiji, W B Lubelwana and A C Jordan, noted that the country's labour policy required all black wages to be kept low:

It is clear that our struggle [for equal pay for equal work for teachers] is inextricably bound up with the struggle of the African labourer ... we have established that to seek equality between white teacher and black teacher is to seek full social, economic and political equality between white and black in South Africa. Our slogan therefore implies that our struggle is the general political struggle for emancipation of the African (Teachers' Vision 14(4), 1948:21).

In his presidential address to the TATA Conference in 1945, Mr S J J Lesolang stated:

If European supremacy is to be maintained in this country, as recently declared by General Smuts, then Africans cannot expect General Smuts, with his Government, to be so foolish as to give them education which will place them on [sic] a position which would make them compete favourably with Europeans. It would defeat the ends of his policy (Good Shepherd, September 1945:2-3).

Such comments were frequently made as it became clear that Government policy was geared towards a system of education which would ensure 'white' domination in all spheres of life - even in the era prior to the accession

of the National Party to power in 1948, and the formulation of the policy of apartheid.

Since 1950, a number of writers have subjected the work of the missionaries to critical scrutiny. In 1952, Dora Taylor, writing under the pseudonym of N Majeke, published a monograph The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest, in which she attacked the work of the churches in all spheres. On the role of the churches in education, Majeke wrote:

...legislation by itself could not ensure the continuance of white domination; for this a more subtle means had to be employed. Education itself had to be used as an instrument of enslavement. Having drawn the African into the economic system, the rulers had assigned them a particular place in their society. It was necessary ... to educate him to his 'proper place'. This was to be the task of the missionaries more than any other educative force (Majeke, 1953:135).

Cochrane has taken a similar line in his critique of the missionaries:

No genuine understanding of the role of the missionaries is possible without considering the interconnections of religious, political and economic concerns. The way in which colonial missionaries engaged with the indigenous people; their hand in the subjugation of chiefdoms; their relation to the forces of economic expansion and to the creation of labour; their specific part in the emergence of a black elite with advantageous connections to the colonies and metropolis - all these themes come to the fore (Cochrane, 1987:21).

The contradiction between what was intended, and what was achieved by some of the missionaries was highlighted

by Jordan Ngubane. After alleging that the churches actively discouraged African clergy from involvement in politics, he observed:

The mission stations were, in terms of education, the most advanced section of the African people at the time [sic]. The missionaries had done magnificent work as school teachers, and the mission stations had produced some of the most militant and effective rebels against white domination ... Dube, Seme and many of the builders of the African people had started life proud to regard themselves as Christians; they died bitterly disappointed with the way in which the Christian Church aided the cause of white domination (Ngubane, 1963:84).

Peter Hinchliff acknowledged that the missionaries allowed themselves to be used by the Government, but suggested that they were to a large extent unaware of the consequences of what they were doing:

The view of the missionary as the advance agent of white imperialism is now widely held. The missionaries were willing to co-operate in the 'christianization' and pacification of the frontier. They were willing to act as government representatives (officially or unofficially). They were inclined to press for the extension of British rule in the interests of peace and justice. It is easy to see how their actions and principles could be interpreted in a way which would have shocked and appalled them (Hinchliff, 1968:50-51).

Leslie Hewson was less sympathetic to the critics and warned against

... careful selection of phrases ... wilful distortion of the documents quoted, a falsification of the facts of history ... judging one age by the standards of another ... imputing to the men who acted motives entirely alien to their character and principles alike (Hewson, 1959:46).

Since the days of Majeke, various writers have debated the relative merits and defects of mission education. A study of such interpretations lies outside the scope of this study: suffice it to note that there is a body of opinion which regards the mission schools as having been instruments of imperial domination from their inception.

During the years 1949-1955, local newspapers, periodicals and journals recorded developments in the field of African education, and a certain amount of the material in this study has been drawn from such sources. The subject has also been touched on in a variety of general and biographical writings which have been published since then.¹⁴ In addition, a number of theses and papers have been written on mission school education, on specific educational institutions, and on various aspects of Bantu Education.¹⁵

Current problems in education have moved the focus of research away from the early Fifties, as educationists now grapple with the requirements of education in the

14. See, for example, Abrahams (1989), Christie (1985), Feit (1967), Hinchliff (1968), Huddleston (1957), Kallaway (1984), Luthuli (1963), Manganyi (1983), Matthews (1981), Paton (1973), Prior (1982), Rich (1982), Roux (1964), and Villa-Vicencio (1988).

15. See, for example, Behardien (1981), Bolnick (1988), Cameron (1986), Hewson (1959), Hyslop (1990), Kallaway (1987), Mbere (1979), Mphahlele (1972), Paterson (1990), Peppeta (1989), Shingler (1973), Tillema (1974), Venter (1961) and Veysie (1969).

Nineties. Yet the full story of the contribution of the churches to education in South Africa remains to be told: it is hoped that this study may provide some food for thought in the contemporary debate on educational affairs.

CHAPTER 2

AFRICAN EDUCATION POLICY: THE APPROACH OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

Community Opposition to Mission Schools

A random perusal of some of the documents in the MCSA archives, and of the mission histories which have been written, provides a glimpse into the story of Methodist involvement in schooling in this country during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is an exciting story of pioneering work in a vast, and often unwelcoming land. It is the story of men and women who believed the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and were anxious to take that Good News to the 'heathen'. The fact that Christianity, Western civilization, imperialism and commercial enterprise very quickly became intertwined did not cause those pioneers great concern: their main task was to convert the 'heathen', and to 'improve' their way of life by whatever means were available to them.

The first Christian missionaries in South Africa were the products of the Evangelical Revival of eighteenth century Britain, which had been spearheaded by the Wesley brothers (Walker, 1918:507-523). They subscribed to the commonly held views of their time: all races had a common origin, but because of the Fall, all were in need of redemption; the 'heathen' lived as they did "because they had not heard of Christ or the civilised way of life

that had followed him" (Ashley, 1980:32). In order for the heathen to become 'civilized', it was necessary that they should adopt Western religious, political, economic, cultural and moral practices. Subsequent to Darwin's exposition of his theories on the origin of species later in the century, this somewhat naive vision of 'uplifting the heathen' simply through the preaching of the Gospel was modified considerably. The belief that 'white' races were superior to 'black' races was gradually adopted by an increasing number of people who had become disillusioned by the numerous reverses they had suffered in their evangelical work. This changing policy is particularly well illustrated in the story of developments at Lovedale during the latter years of the nineteenth century (Shepherd, 1971).

The missionaries found themselves face to face with cultures which they did not understand, and which they saw as having no intrinsic value. Western values and practices were imposed by the missionaries as an essential adjunct to 'conversion': the fact that this attitude towards authority and kinship structures, land management, labour and moral issues, would disrupt the African way of life completely was not foreseen.

The story of Methodist involvement in schooling in South Africa is the story of men and women who sacrificed much in an ongoing struggle against opposition from all sides to their efforts. Those who responded most readily to

the teaching of the missionaries were often, at least in the early days, people who were outcasts in African society, who had forfeited, for one reason or another, their tribal ties, and who welcomed the protection afforded by the mission stations. Such people wielded little influence in African society.

Some of the most vociferous opponents of the missionaries were the chiefs, who resisted any moves which might reduce their power and authority within the tribes, or diminish traditional cultural norms. Many parents, too, regarded the schools and the teaching of the missionaries, as being disruptive to their traditional way of life, and soon learnt how to reap the benefits offered by the missionaries - such as food and clothes provided for children who attended school - without succumbing to the control of the missionaries or the message which they preached.

Towards the end of the century, when the benefits of education to those who had received it - in terms of better jobs and higher wages - became apparent, the opposition of both chiefs and parents began to diminish. Donald Veysie has, however, noted that even then, African support for education was "not always from the same motive as the missionaries" (Veysie, 1969:103).¹

1. He quoted Groves' comment that "the clamour for schools was motivated by a desire 'to share the white man's power'" (Quoted in Veysie, 1969:103).

On the other hand, the missionaries faced opposition from 'white' colonists who believed that the missionaries were siding with the Africans against them, particularly after the depredations of the Border Wars; from the Dutch Trekkers, who saw no reason for teaching Africans to read and write and who had, in fact, left the Colony largely in protest against moves to set 'black' and 'white' on a more equal footing; and later from the majority of South African 'whites' who became increasingly suspicious of the 'educated African' who had not only acquired ideas and ambitions 'above his allotted station', but was providing competition in the labour market as well.

Obstacles to Expansion

Two of the themes highlighted in this study were evident in the early days of Methodist schools: firstly, very few missionaries were trained teachers, and none, it would seem, was set aside to concentrate entirely on educational affairs. All of them had to provide a variety of services, both on the central mission station, and at outstations scattered throughout the region that they served. Hewson commented on the policy of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) regarding mission education:

The WMMS had believed as ardently as any Missionary Society in the importance of education, but had been far less convinced

than other Societies of the necessity of entrusting education to the trained specialist. Wesleyan missionaries were expected to add the supervision of education, and in some cases instruction as well, to their primary duties of preaching and pastoral work (Hewson, 1959:116).

Findlay and Holdsworth made similar observations about the impossible demands which were placed on the missionaries, noting at the same time, however, how much the missionaries did achieve through the provision of basic education, the translation of the Scriptures into hitherto unwritten languages, and the printing of these Scriptures and other reading material:

... when one rejoices most over such results his rejoicing is tempered by the reflection that infinitely more might have been accomplished from the first if there had been a definite educational policy laid down for our African mission, and if such a policy had been strictly observed (Findlay and Holdsworth, 1922:318).

The second point highlighted in this study is the financial question: during the nineteenth century, financial support came from a variety of sources, but was never sufficient to enable the missionaries to expand their evangelical and educational work to meet the perceived needs of the communities they served. Numerous instances are on record of schools or institutions having to cut back their services, or close down completely for periods of time, because of financial constraints.

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to sketch the

background to the story of the 1950's. Three aspects of the story have been singled out for consideration: the establishment of a network of mission schools throughout the Southern African region; the variety of schools and types of education provided; and the way in which mission schools were financed.

African Methodist Mission Schools in Southern Africa

In 1910, when the Union of South Africa was established, the Methodist Church was responsible for African mission schools in all four provinces, as well as in Swaziland and Mocambique. The work that had begun in the Cape Colony in the 1820's, notably under the inspiration of the Rev William Shaw and others, had spread inland as the territory was opened up, and had expanded, despite many setbacks and opposition. In 1910, the MCSA was responsible for 767 African primary schools, and eleven trade schools and secondary schools, which catered for 45 804 students, and employed 1 359 teachers (Conference. Minutes, 1910: 234-237).

The most significant early developments took place in the Eastern Cape region, where between 1823 and 1830, Shaw was instrumental in opening six new mission stations.² At each of the stations, a school was also

2. Wesleyville, Mount Coke, Butterworth, Morley, Clarkebury and Buntingville.

established and run by the missionary, assisted very often by his wife and daughters (no mention has been found of sons helping at the schools!). As soon as some of the early converts had learnt enough, they began to teach others. Numerous mission stations were set up in the following years, until there was a network of schools throughout the region. Many of those stations had a chequered history, as they were situated in the heart of the contested territory, and several were destroyed or relocated more than once during the course of the various nineteenth century wars.

Before 1820, Methodist missionaries had also ventured north from Cape Town to Namaqualand, and in the early Twenties, to Bechuanaland and across the Vaal. For two years, in 1823 and 1824, the Rev Samuel Broadbent worked at Maquassie (near present-day Klerksdorp), and sometime after 1826, the Revs James Archbell and Thomas Hodgson set up a school at Warrenton (near Kimberley) (Mears. Methodist missionaries, no.4:33-38, 46-47).

Records of the First District Meetings of the Bechuana District in 1837 indicate that by then, a number of Methodist schools were in operation in that region, which included the Orange River Sovereignty. In 1854, however, Methodists were forced to withdraw from the newly established Orange Free State, and they retained only the station at Thaba'Nchu. According to Molema, the Boers "regarded the mission stations as breeding

places of sedition" (Molema. Chief Moroka:128), and therefore ordered the closure of all mission stations in the new Republic. Thaba Nchu, however, remained under the jurisdiction of Chief Moroka, who continued to support and encourage the Methodist missionaries there.

In 1843 or 1844, the Revs Richard Giddy and James Allison took two African teachers to Swaziland, and they set up a school at Mpisi. In 1846 the mission was destroyed, and the students moved with Allison to Indaleni in Natal. Methodists did not return to Swaziland until 1881, when schools were again opened there, the best-known being that at Mahamba.

The work in Natal apparently took longer to get established. In 1856, the Natal Synod approved the opening of industrial schools at Edendale, Indaleni and Verulam, but the experiment was not successful, since not enough teachers or students were forthcoming at that time. Government grants were withdrawn in 1869, resulting in the closure of all three institutions. In 1883 a brochure was produced to publicize the proposed "Wesleyan Native Training Institute" to be established at Edendale, on the initiative of the Natal District Committee

... for the suitable Education of Native Young Men, who are the Candidate Preachers and Pastors of our Native Churches; the sound and practical teaching of Native Teachers and Interpreters; and also the Mental, Moral and Domestic training of Native Girls (CL: MS 15,334).

The story of Methodist schools in the Transvaal, subsequent to Broadbent's early work at Maquassie, can be traced to five African teachers³, who had returned to the Transvaal from Methodist missions elsewhere in the country, and set up schools in various areas:

The first churches-cum-schools in the Transvaal were established by these Bantu pioneers and run by them without such appliances as blackboards, pens, pencils or readers ... When the white missionaries took over they made it their policy that on every station and at every preaching place an efficient day school was started. These schools were to help in the development of the Church (Mphahlele, 1972:45).

By 1884, it was reported that eleven such missions had been set up (Mphahlele, 1972:57). A night school providing both secular and religious teaching was established for workers in about 1888 on the Witwatersrand (Venter, 1961:245). In 1916, the Rev E W Grant was sent "to inaugurate evangelistic, social and educational work in the compounds of the East Rand Proprietary Mines", at the mining company's expense (Mears, 1956: 15). By 1898 three Methodist societies had been established in the Delagoa Bay area, each with its own school (Veysie, 1969:110).

At the time of Union, the Methodist Church had a foothold in every region of South Africa, and from that time on, under the guidance of a number of dedicated and

3. Mr David Magata (Potchefstroom, 1871), Mr Klaas Ndhlovu (north of Pretoria, 1879), Mr Hans Aapjie (Makapanstad, 1879), Mr May Lothi (Marishani, mid-80's) and Mr Samuel Mathabathe (Northern Transvaal, about 1880) (Mphahlele, 1972: 40).

hard-working missionaries, the network of Methodist schools across the country expanded rapidly. The opposition and the criticism continued, but the demand continued to outstrip the supply.

A Variety of Schools and Types of Schooling

It is probably true to say that for much of the time that the Methodist Church was involved in mission schools, many missionaries saw that involvement primarily in terms of its usefulness for evangelism, conversion, and the recruitment of new members. In the early mission days, the teaching of 'civilized' norms and values was an important aspect of schooling. After the completion of the first "Kafir Grammar" in 1833 by the Rev W B Boyce, portions of the Scriptures were translated, providing the impetus for instruction in reading and writing. Sunday Schools often served as places for literacy teaching for both adults and children, much as they had done in Britain during the nineteenth century.

In looking back at the early mission schools, it is difficult to picture just what they were like. Some of the smallest which were described in the Church records would hardly be regarded as 'schools' by teachers today. When schools were established in new areas, attention was initially focussed on reading, then on writing, and only later on arithmetic. Needlework, gardening, and building

were included as an introduction to the niceties of 'civilized' life. It was only in the 1860's and 1870's that a full range of subjects, such as those taught in British schools, was first introduced at some of the mission schools.

Teaching in Methodist schools in the nineteenth century took place in many different situations, with students ranging from toddlers to adults. Teachers included the missionaries and their wives, newly literate African adults, and senior students who worked as pupil-teachers while they continued their own education. The term 'school' was used to describe a variety of different gatherings. In the late 1830's, a school for the Griquas at Lishuani, run by the missionary, the Rev John Edwards, was described in the following words:

There were many children ... whom he was anxious to teach to read. Of books there were none. The printing press was packed up, and there was no-one who knew how to work it. So, like Gutenberg, Mr Edwards cut letters out of the bark of trees, dipped them in ink, and stamped them on a sheet of foolscap. This paper was then hung up on a hut-pole, and the letters were pointed out to the children with a long stick (Whiteside, 1906:336).

In 1876, it was reported that Chief Umhlonhlo had "a teacher at his own Kraal towards which he contributes £10 p.a. Ten of his children meet in class" (CL: MS 15,192). In 1877, reference was made to a small group of scholars meeting "in the open air" in the Bensonvale Circuit (CL: MS 15,620).

Not all Methodist work was carried out on a small scale, though, and the story of Methodist involvement in African education is also the story of Institutions such as Healdtown, Kilnerton, Indaleni, Clarkebury, and Shawbury. At these centres, numerous buildings were erected, a variety of levels of education was offered, and provision was made to accommodate boarders. By the middle of the twentieth century, some Institutions catered for up to a thousand students in the various schools on the premises.

Where boarding departments were attached to the schools, irregular attendance was not a problem, but in many of the outlying schools, enrolments were often considerably higher than the average attendance. In his study of Mount Coke, Walker noted:

In the South African Missionary Reports [for 1901] we read that parents keep the children away for various reasons or no reason at all. Movements of the people due to wars and other causes also placed serious obstacles in the way of good results, an irregular attendance affecting other students as well (CL: MS 15,792).

Five Methodist schools in the Eastern Cape⁴ benefitted from the programme of Sir George Grey, Governor of the Cape Colony from 1854 to 1859, for the establishment of industrial training centres. However, when Sir Langham Dale, Superintendent-General of Education in the Cape Colony from 1859, was sent in 1862/3 to investigate the schools which were receiving grants, he was very critical

4. Healdtown, Lesseyton, Salem, Peddie and Kamastone.

of the inefficient teaching he observed at most of the centres. The industrial departments at all the Methodist schools were closed down in the early Sixties.

During the Sixties, a period marked by depression and drought, little progress was made in the mission field. In the 1865 Report of the Buntingville Circuit, it was noted:

Of the schools, one weekday and two Sabbath, we cannot give a favourable report. The parents do not care for their children being taught, and the teachers are extremely inefficient. Without better teachers, we can hardly hope for any appreciable results from our schools (CL: MS 15,192).

That last sentence highlighted a major problem faced by the missionaries. The WMMS sent out some teachers from Britain, but not nearly enough to meet the need. Mears' account of the establishment of the first Swaziland school gives an insight into the very basic nature of the education being offered in the early days, when there were no teacher training facilities, but perhaps more significantly, no people yet ready to be trained as teachers. In 1843/4, the Rev James Allison took two African 'teachers' to Mpisi, where they began to teach the local people to read. On his return to the school, Allison was impressed with the progress made, and so he then taught the 'teachers' to write (Mears. Wesleyan Baralong Mission in Trans-Orangia, 1821-1844:31).

Various references to teacher-training programmes are to

be found in the records from 1840 onwards - including the Watson Institutes, and the 'Westminster System' of pupil-teachers - but it was not until 1867 that the training institution at Healdtown was opened, with fifteen pupil teachers and four candidates for the ministry. That was the beginning of an extensive programme of teacher training, to be offered at numerous centres throughout the country in the course of the next eighty years.

In the provision of theological training for Africans, the Methodists were pioneers: the first African Methodist ministers were ordained at Healdtown in 1871. Theological training was transferred to Lesseyton in 1883, and to Fort Hare in 1916 (Hewson, 1959:259-261).

For many years, most schools catered for primary pupils, offering education up to Standard Six at the most, but as the demand for secondary schooling grew during the course of the twentieth century, an increasing number of secondary schools was opened. Many of these provided boarding accommodation as well, since the majority of students did not live in the immediate vicinity of the schools.

Financing of Mission Education

Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society

In 1816, thirty-two years after the constitution of the Methodist Church in Britain as a separate legal entity, the WMMS was established to co-ordinate the missionary outreach of Methodism. It was under the auspices and discipline of this Society that the majority of Methodist missionaries came to South Africa. Much of the funding for the missions came through the Society as well.

Some of the records indicate, however, that this system of 'remote control' was far from satisfactory, since the officials in London had little real understanding of the situation in South Africa, or of the nature of the difficulties encountered by the missionaries (Gower, 1976:22; Findlay and Holdsworth, 1922:263). They were unable to understand why they did not receive better returns on the money which was being spent. From time to time, cutbacks were ordered which only served to further hamper progress.

Hewson noted that "the Missionary Society overseas was hard put to maintain effective strength on the Mission field without the crippling burden of mission education as well" (Hewson, 1959:116). The WMMS officials expected the missionaries to oversee the establishment

and running of mission schools as part of their daily work. They were either unwilling or unable to send qualified teachers at the Society's expense to assist at mission schools in the Colony. When the Rev William Impey, principal of Healdtown, travelled to London in 1867 to look for financial assistance for the training of teachers, preachers and evangelists, he found the Missionary Committee unsympathetic. They felt that too little "was being done on the spot [i.e. in South Africa] to accept responsibility for reducing expenditure or generating income" (Hewson, 1959:246).

According to Whiteside, the Missionary Society Committee members began to question developments in South Africa during the Seventies, fearing that some South African Methodists "were in danger of departing from the usages and laws of the parent Church." They also expressed the opinion that

... considering the claims of India, China and Europe, in which countries were towns containing a population as large as the European element of the whole of Cape Colony, too much money and too many men were being sent to South Africa, and that nothing justified the outlay but the hope that in a few years both colonial and mission work would be self-supporting (Whiteside, 1906:413).

One of the secretaries of the WMMS, the Rev John Kilner, was sent to investigate, and he spent the whole of 1880 in South Africa. During his visit, plans were finalised for the formation of a semi-independent South African Conference, to incorporate all the existing

Districts, except the Transvaal and Swaziland District. After 1883, when the new South African Conference was established, mission grants from Britain were steadily reduced, and no further assistance was received by the South African Conference after 1902. The Missionary Committee retained responsibility for the Transvaal District until 1933⁵, but the support it provided was totally inadequate to meet the need there. By 1927, the Mission Grant accounted for less than 10% of the running costs of education in the Transvaal (Mphahlele, 1972:210).

After 1883, local Methodists began to accept responsibility for the support of missions: Whiteside recorded that contributions to the new Mission Fund increased from £2 800 in 1882 to £10 951 in 1903 (Whiteside, 1906:417). In 1950, total contributions to the Mission Fund amounted to £53 775: from the accounts published in the Minutes of Conference for that year, it would appear that about 11% of that figure was earmarked for education.

In addition to contributions which came through the WMMS, individual benefactors on occasion responded to appeals for financial assistance for specific mission stations: Healdtown was named after its major benefactors, Mr and Miss Heald of Manchester.

5. In 1933, all Methodist work in Southern Africa was united under a South African Conference, independent of the British Methodist Church.

State Subsidies

State subsidies for mission schools were something of a mixed blessing, because the churches had lost more and more control over the schools as the subsidies had increased. Nevertheless, without those subsidies, African education would have made little progress, as the churches themselves were unable to find the money necessary to extend the work they had started, and the various governments showed little inclination to provide educational facilities for many years.

In the Cape, the first subsidies were made available in 1841, and in Natal, £5 000 per annum was allocated to mission schools under the 1856 Natal Charter, though few grants were in fact made for many years. The position in the Orange Free State is unclear: in 1877, the Diamond Fields Circuit reported that the school at Bultfontein had recently received a "grant-in-aid" from the Government of £40, while the school at Burghersdorp reported in the same year that it received a grant of £30 per annum (CL: MS 15,620). On the other hand, in 1895, the Kimberley and Bloemfontein District reported that "every part of the Educational work of the District shows an advance and this despite the fact that the OFS Government has not yet made any grants-in-aid to our schools." By contrast, it was recorded in the Bensonvale Report for the same year, that "the Education

Department is dealing liberally with us" (CL: MS 15,620). It seems likely that by the end of the century, some State subsidies were being paid to schools in the Orange Free State. In the Transvaal, no subsidies for mission schools came from the State until after the end of the Anglo-Boer War in 1902. Venter noted that the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek had no sympathy for the cause of African education: "Die onderwys van die nie-blanke was 'n liefdadigsheids-onderneming en is slegs deur die verskillende sending-genootskappe behartig" (Venter, 1961:278).

After Union, the churches continued to receive State subsidies, which helped to pay the salaries of qualified teachers, but the inadequacy of those salaries, and the discrepancy between salaries paid to 'black' and 'white' teachers were contentious issues, as has already been noted. Increasingly the calls from African organizations were for State funding for all education on the basis of the number of children in school, instead of the lump sum subsidies, which remained much the same, no matter how much the demand for education increased.

African Contributions

In the early years, the missionaries offered schooling as a free service to all who were willing to attend, and they relied on gifts from well-wishers, and the WMMS

contributions, to cover the costs incurred. It was many years before the idea of charging school fees became acceptable to the missionaries.

Once they became convinced of the importance of schooling, however, African parents began to contribute, both in cash and kind, to the costs of providing premises. In 1875, the Pondo chief, Nquilisio, was so anxious that a Training School should be opened in his territory, that he ordered his followers to give cattle to the mission to pay for the building. The response was so great, that £3 500 was realised from the sale of the donated animals, and the buildings were erected at Buntingville on the strength of that gift (Whiteside, 1906:300). Whiteside also recorded that fourteen schools were established among the Gcalekas during the last decade of the nineteenth century, "the cost of each of which was paid at the opening" (Whiteside, 1906: 291). Writing in 1877, Holden commented on increased African support for educational enterprises: "Already a great change has come over the Kaffir mind: education is highly valued by many, and the parents are willing to pay and actually do pay for their children being taught" (Holden, 1877:363).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, boarders at Kilnerton were paying £10 or £12 per annum in fees (Burnet, 1907). By 1954, average fees at Institutions were estimated to be £24 per annum. Such fees were

beyond the means of many, and a columnist in the South African Weekly in the early Fifties, writing under the pseudonym 'Amicus', claimed that "fees are fast becoming so high that these schools are fast becoming no longer Methodist schools for Methodist youth, but the preserves of rich men who alone can afford to pay the fees required" (South African Weekly, 13.10.1950:8). Nevertheless, many parents made great sacrifices to enable their children to get the best education that was available. Joseph Peppeta, in his thesis on Healdtown, quoted his father's comment at the time that he was sent to Healdtown: "Go, my boy, but you must know that we are going to eat [sic] water behind" (Peppeta, 1989:116). Other writers have recorded similar instances of sacrifices made by parents and siblings in order that some members of the family might acquire secondary and tertiary education.

Conclusion

Throughout this period, the Church, the State and the African people looked at education from very different perspectives. For the missionaries, education was but a necessary adjunct to evangelism, which was their primary concern; for the State, education helped in the process of 'civilization' and acculturation of the African people, and in due course gave them sufficient understanding of the 'white' person's way of life and

language to enable them to be useful workers in a society which relied heavily on unskilled or semiskilled labour; for many Africans, education was seen as an essential prerequisite for employment, and the only means through which they might aspire to equality with the 'whites' who ruled the land. Such characterizations gloss over many issues, ignoring as they do the diversity of thinking which existed within each group, but they do provide some indication of the variety of ways in which people viewed African education.

It was to be anticipated that those who held such diverse views would clash at some stage: relations between Africans and the other groups became increasingly strained as the twentieth century progressed. Protests against inequality, discrimination and inferior facilities started with the teachers, but after the Second World War, nearly every major Institution faced student disturbances and protests as well.⁶ The missionaries were regarded - at least by some students - as agents of State policy, and bore the brunt of their anger. The church authorities 'restored order' as quickly as possible, sometimes with the assistance of the local police force, and the dissident students were punished, and on occasion expelled. The records indicate that there was little sympathy shown to the students, and little notice taken of their grievances which were generally regarded as being unreasonable.

6. See, for instance, Malcolm (1947) and Hyslop (1990).

On the whole, the churches and the State worked together reasonably harmoniously throughout this period. On occasion, church leaders urged the State to accept greater responsibility for the provision of educational facilities, or for improvements in teachers' salaries and conditions of service, but they never took any stronger action to pressurize the State into making a response.

The pattern of accommodation by the 'liberals' and confrontation by the 'radicals' had begun to emerge. In the following chapters, attention has been focussed on the way both groups continued to respond along those lines, once they were faced with the Nationalist Government's plans to restructure the whole African education system in line with the policy of apartheid.

CHAPTER 3

THE EISELEN COMMISSION

Background to the Appointment of the Commission

From the time of the establishment of the first mission schools in the Cape, until 1948 when the Nationalist Party came to power in South Africa, the story of developments in South Africa was influenced by a wide range of economic, social and demographic factors. Christie has outlined these developments (Christie, 1985:33-54), showing that "social relations developed along lines of colour and class and that education was part of these social relations" (Christie, 1985:51).

Throughout the twentieth century, increasing numbers of people moved to the towns in search of work. The demand for facilities increased rapidly, but few plans were made by the State to meet that demand. The churches responded to 'black' demands for schools as far as they were able, but they were woefully unable to meet the need.

The Second World War brought new problems in its wake, and tensions rose between groups of 'black' and 'white' South Africans, as an increasing number of 'black' South Africans voiced their demands for just treatment and full citizenship rights. At the same time, many 'whites'

became fearful at the prospect of losing the privileges which they had enjoyed for so long. The situation was further complicated by divisions within both the 'black' and 'white' communities over appropriate ways of securing or retaining power.

The National Party came to power in 1948 on an election platform of 'apartheid', and after that date, much of the energy of the Government was devoted to ensuring that each population 'group' in South Africa would 'develop along its own lines', in order to avoid conflict and friction between those 'groups'.

Education in 1948 was essentially segregated, but African education was subjected to scrutiny because it was believed that the churches which ran the Secondary Schools and Training Institutions were encouraging students to aspire to equal status with 'white' South Africans. Such an idea was anathema to the Afrikaner Nationalists, and it was clear to them that measures would have to be taken to put an end to church involvement in African education. The appointment of the 'Commission to Inquire into Native Education' was the first step in that process.

Members and Terms of Reference

A brief announcement in the Government Gazette of the 4th February 1949 read as follows: "It is hereby notified that His Excellency the Governor-General has been pleased to appoint a Commission to investigate and report on Native Education." This Commission was to lay the foundation for one aspect of the Afrikaner Nationalists' 'apartheid dream', namely the introduction of a system of Bantu education, which led to the take-over of most mission schools, and all teacher training colleges by the State.

Dr W M M Eiselen was appointed Chairman, and Mr J E van Zyl Secretary (but not a member of the Commission). The other members were Prof J de Wet Keyter (University of the Orange Free State), Prof A H Murray (University of Cape Town), Dr P A W Cook (National Bureau of Educational and Social Research), Prof G B A Gerdener (University of Stellenbosch), Dr M D C De Wet Nel (Nationalist Party Member of Parliament), Mr W A Hofmeyr (retired Eastern Cape School Inspector) and Mr J Macleod (retired Chief School Inspector, Natal).

Of the eight men, six had impressive academic records, four were professors at South African universities, six were Afrikaans-speaking, at least three were sons of missionaries with roots in the German missionary tradition, five were members of one of the 'Dutch'

churches, three were foundation members of the state-sponsored South African Bureau for Racial Affairs, and two were members of the Suid Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns. Two were known to be members of the Broederbond.¹ The majority of members were brought up within the traditions of Afrikaner Nationalism, and are likely to have had few objections to the principles of Christian National Education (CNE) and apartheid as these were being spelt out in the late 1940's. The document on CNE, published by the Instituut vir Christelike-Nasionale Onderwys in 1948, had stated clearly the attitude of the proponents of CNE to African education. Their beliefs were firmly rooted in their understanding of trusteeship ('voogdyskap'), of 'Christian' and 'National' principles of education, and in their belief that, for the time being, the State and the Protestant churches needed to co-operate in the provision of 'Native education':

Ons glo egter dat die gees van natuurlike-onderwys en -opvoeding en die opleiding van natuurlike-leerkragte so spoedig moontlik deur die natuur self onderneem moet word, maar onder beheer en leiding van die staat; met dien verstande egter dat die finansiering van natuurlike-onderwys op so 'n grondslag gestel word dat dit nie ten koste van die blanke onderwys geskied nie. Ons glo ten slotte dat natuurlike-onderwys en -opvoeding tot die ontwikkeling van 'n selfstandige self-onderhoudende en self-versorgende natuurlike-gemeenskap op Christelik-Nasionale grondslag moet lei (Instituut vir Christelik-Nasionale Onderwys, 1948:29).

1. At that stage information concerning membership of the Broederbond was a closely guarded secret, and it has not been possible to ascertain whether others also belonged to the organization.

When one considers the terms of reference of the Commission, it is not surprising that the Government did not appoint as Commissioners any whose approach to the question of African education was not in line with that of its decision-makers and policy-planners. A suggestion, for instance, that Senator Edgar Brookes would have been a suitable substitute for the original Natal nominee, Mr D McK Malcolm, was not followed up (UOD E53/71). Moreover, there were no representatives of the English-speaking churches or missions, no African members, and no women appointed to the Commission.

When the Commission Report was first discussed in Parliament, Senator Edgar Brookes challenged the Minister of Education, Arts and Science, Mr J H Viljoen, to say why the Government had found it necessary to appoint this Commission when the Native Advisory Board for Education was well-equipped to undertake a study of African education. The Minister replied: "The ad hoc commission was appointed to have an objective approach, which would have been difficult if the Advisory Board, consisting largely of interested parties accustomed to the existing system, had to advise in the matter" (Senate. Debates, 1951: col 2187).² The implication that the Commission which carried out the inquiry did not consist "largely of interested parties", and did have "an objective

2. Such circumlocution and double-talk were a feature of Nationalist Party politics. Good examples are to be found in the titles of some of the Acts which were promulgated during this period, e.g. the Abolition of Passes Act (1952) and the Extension of University Education Act (1959).

approach", would seem to carry little weight in the light of what was known about the Commissioners.

The terms of reference of the Commission, drafted by the Minister of Education, Arts and Science, and amended slightly by Cook, read as follows:

- (1) The formulation of the principles and aims of education for Natives as an independent race, in which their past and present, their inherent racial qualities, their distinctive characteristics and aptitude, and their needs under the ever-changing social conditions are taken into consideration.
- (2) The extent to which the existing primary, secondary and vocational educational system for Natives and the training of Native teachers should be modified in respect of the contents and form of syllabuses, in order to conform to the proposed principles and aims, and to prepare Natives more effectively for their future occupations.
- (3) The organisation and administration of the various branches of Native education.
- (4) The basis on which such education should be financed.
- (5) Such other aspects of Native education as may be related to the preceding (Eiselen Commission Report, 1951: Annexure A).

The underlying assumptions of the Government are clear - that 'Native education' was something apart from 'education', specifically geared to the 'needs' of 'Natives', and organised, administered and financed separately; that special aims and principles had to be formulated for 'Native education'; that such education was particularly concerned with preparing people 'for future occupations', and would therefore require changes

in 'contents and form of syllabuses'.

When these terms of reference were published, comparatively few organisations or individuals questioned these assumptions, or expressed concern about the implications for future developments in education. In many ways, the Commission was stating what was already generally accepted, at least by those who were responsible for the existing education system. At a time when African education was becoming increasingly burdensome to the churches, any attempt to re-assess the situation and look for ways of meeting the growing demand by Africans for education would have been welcomed. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that the majority of those involved in the provision of education were willing to co-operate with the Commission. The most vehement opponents were those who had a deep concern for education, but did not have to deal with the very real problems of finance and administration.

At the first meeting of the Commissioners, Eiselen made his viewpoint on the task of the Commission quite clear:

Ons moet probeer om die publiek die betekenis van ons voogdyskap oor die nie-blankes te laat besef. Baie verstaan glad nie wat daarmee bedoel word nie. Ons moet dit so probeer stel dat dit ingang vind. Dit sal ons plig wees om ons sienswyse so objektief en onbevooroordeeld as moontlik in te stel (BC 282. A1:1 Minutes, 10-11.2.1949).

At this meeting, discussion centred on a draft questionnaire, drawn up by Eiselen and Cook. This was based on

the terms of reference of the Commission, and offered guidelines to those who would submit evidence to the Commission. Some people and organisations were specifically requested to submit evidence, while advertisements in the press informed the general public of the work of the Commission and invited them to respond.

The first eight questions in the questionnaire³ provoked considerable opposition from some respondents. They gave a clear indication of the assumptions which lay behind the appointment by the Nationalist Government, of a Commission to inquire into 'Native Education', and were rejected out of hand by those who scorned any suggestion that it was educationally sound to try to distinguish between 'education' and 'native education'. These questions dealt with "the guiding principles and aims of native education", whether "Natives" could be regarded as a "separate and independent race", the "special qualities and aptitudes of the Natives", their "social heritage", changes in their "social conditions", and the "future careers of the Native". The next seven questions dealt with more practical matters relating to the way in which African education was operating: the "chief defects" of the existing system; recommendations for syllabus changes, the place and nature of religious education and of manual training, school organisation and administration, control and financing. The final two questions sug-

3. See Appendix G.

gested other topics for consideration, such as adult education, education for chiefs and leaders, compulsory education, and various language issues.

Over the period of two years, the Commissioners received written and oral evidence from several hundred witnesses from all walks of life, representing a wide cross-section of political and religious viewpoints. Visits were also paid by the Commissioners to 158 centres, schools and institutions in the Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal and the Eastern Cape during 1949.

In the evidence presented to the Commission, both written and oral, at least three clear approaches emerge: some took the questionnaire at its face value and did not query the philosophy which gave rise to the questions; others, regarding education as the inalienable right of all South Africans, rejected outright the suggestion that there was any justification for the use of the term 'Native education', and responded to the questionnaire from that perspective; a third group affirmed its acceptance of the Government policy of apartheid, and responded quite specifically in that spirit. Some had thought through the whole question of the aims and objectives and the future of education for Africans very clearly, while others responded quite subjectively, making use of the opportunity to air their own particular grievances.

The full records of the Commission are preserved in the State Archives, Pretoria (UOD E53/71), but the material in the following section has been drawn from the papers of one of the Commissioners, Prof Andrew Murray. These papers are located in the University of Cape Town Archives (BC 282), and include the Minutes of most of the meetings of the Commission, copies of the majority of the Memoranda submitted to the Commission, as well as other relevant documents, and the Minutes or Reports of the various tours undertaken by the Commissioners. These last are not verbatim reports (the Commission was refused permission to purchase a tape-recorder!) and the style varies from one tour to another. It is not clear whether or not they were all written up by the Secretary of the Commission. During the tours, some witnesses were called by the Commissioners to answer questions relating to memoranda submitted earlier; others requested permission to give evidence orally; and some staff members were interviewed at schools and Institutions visited by the Commissioners. From these records it was possible to gain a picture of the wide variety of responses which the Commission received: in this study, attention has been focused on the responses of Methodist clergy and Methodist laypeople involved in education.

The final Report of the Commission was compiled from sections written by each of the Commissioners, who were allocated specific areas on which to concentrate when collating the evidence presented to the Commission, e.g.

Union or Provincial Control, Finance, Teacher Training, Syllabi. The drafts were submitted for consideration by all the Commissioners, and Eiselen and Cook⁴ were responsible for the final preparation of the Report.

Eiselen was appointed Secretary of Native Affairs in October 1949. He, therefore, found it impossible to meet with the Commissioners until after the end of the Parliamentary Session in June 1950. When it was not possible to find a replacement for him, Prof G B Gerdener reluctantly agreed to act as Chairman until Eiselen was able to attend the meetings again. It was under Gerdener's chairmanship that most of the chapter drafts were, in fact, discussed. When Eiselen returned to the meetings in August 1950, he clarified what he believed the final report should stress. Although this statement generated some discussion among the Commissioners, they did not significantly alter his proposals. The record of his address to the Twelfth Meeting of the Commissioners is worth quoting at some length, as it indicates clearly the way in which he influenced the shape of the final Report:

Die Voorsitter wys daarop dat vorige kommissies nooit die moed gehad het om aan te beveel dat die onderwys geharmoniseer moet word met die maatskaplike eise van die Naturellebevolking nie. Hy sien gevaar dat ons aan dieselfde versuim sal skuldig maak - dat ons die sosiale faktor opsy sal skuif. Daarom pleit hy daarvoor dat ons konsekwent tot ons rigsgnoer sal neem die sosiale aspek van die vraagstuk. Klem moet gelê word op

4. Both played key roles in the implementation of Bantu Education from 1954 onwards.

die Bantoe-gemeenskap. [Hy vra] of ons nie deur plaaslike komitees behoorlike ko-ordinasie tussen onderwys en ander dienste kan bewerk nie, wat ook groter verantwoordelik op die Bantoe sal lê? Voorsitter hou vol dat as hierdie weg gevolg word dit vir ons makliker sal wees om tot 'n besluit te kom insake uniale of provinsiale beheer, staats- of sendingskole, die koppeling van finansies aan die ontwikkeling van die Naturel, ens. (BC 282. A1:1 Minutes, 9.8.1950).

He went on to stress the need for the co-ordination of all services for 'natives', and spoke at some length on the merits of local school committees, and the need to transfer control of education from the provinces to local communities. He condemned the present system of financing 'Native education', and suggested the introduction of a fixed ratio of contributions from state and 'native' sources. "Dan sal die gemeenskap nie meer kry tensy hulle hulself belas nie. Dan sou hoofbelasting in heel ander lig gesien word." He concluded on a note which was to be echoed in the De Lange Commission Report (Human Sciences Research Council. Investigation into Education, 1981) thirty years later. "Alles wat ek gesê het, is gebaseer op veronderstelling dat produktiwiteit van die Naturel sal vermeerder. As die onderwys nie so ingedeel word dat dit produktiwiteit verhoog nie, verval die hele idee hier voortgestaan" (BC 282. A1:1 Minutes, 9.8.1950).

Initial Reactions to the Commission's Appointment

In the months following the appointment of the Eiselen Commission, a wide variety of reactions was recorded in the national press. Die Kerkbode,⁵ welcomed the appointment of the Commission, urged its readers to co-operate with and pray for the Commissioners, and expressed gratitude for the fact that five of the Commissioners were members of "ons Hollandse Kerk" (Die Kerkbode, 13.4.1949:9). It also noted its belief that the formulation of a clear policy on native education was essential.

The English-speaking churches appear to have been heavily influenced by the deliberations of the Christian Council⁶ in their reactions to the Commission's appointment: in the Christian Council Quarterly, it was noted that the memorandum which the Council had submitted to the Commission had been drawn up by "a committee of experts", headed by Dr Alexander Kerr⁷, and had been "a useful guide to individual Churches in their own evidence" (Christian Council Quarterly, October 1949:5). No comment was made, or judgement passed, on the terms of reference of the Commission, or the questionnaire which had been sent out.

5. The weekly newspaper published by the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa.

6. A body established in 1936 to replace the General Missionary Conference. In the beginning it represented more than twenty-five churches and church organisations in South Africa, but in 1941 the Afrikaans churches established a separate Federal Missionary Council. One of the aims of the Christian Council had been to

In the South African Outlook⁸ on the other hand, it was suggested that the questionnaire could provide readers with a useful means of engaging in some thorough soul-searching as to why they were involved in African education, even if they chose not to submit their ideas to the Commission. Strong reservations were expressed, however, about the Commission's terms of reference, and the inhibiting effect that these might have on the presentation of evidence:

We should be happier about the outcome of it if we could feel that the Commission was at liberty to deal in a really scientific manner with the answers which will come to it. But the limitations implicit in its terms of reference seems likely to make that impossible. The reaction of very many of the people who could help the commissioners most will probably be the feeling that their enquiry is more than a century out of date, and that their report is likely to be of academic interest, rather than of practical value, since it presupposes a situation which no longer exists and can never return (South African Outlook, 2.5.1949:67).

Either the editor was not conversant with the debate going on at that time about Christian National Education, as it affected African education in particular, or he chose to believe that that policy, and the ideas being

overcome the problems which had arisen in Christian missionary work because of denominational rivalry, something which was totally incomprehensible to the people they were trying to convert to Christianity.

7. Convenor of the Education Section of the Christian Council, and former principal of the South African Native College, Fort Hare.
8. First published by the Lovedale Press in 1870. According to Switzer, South African Outlook "reflected a wide range of political, social, economic and religious themes in keeping with its status as a major vehicle of expression for Southern Africa's liberal, multi-racial Christian elite" (Switzer, 1979:270).

expounded by people such as Eiselen, were of no more than 'academic interest'.

The English churches were notably silent about the appointment of the Commission: in the magazines of the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches, the only mention that was traced was in the section headed 'Christian Council Notes' in The Congregationalist.⁹ Considering the extent of the involvement of these churches in African education, their failure to pass any comment on the appointment of a Government Commission to investigate the matter is remarkable. This perhaps confirms the suspicion that African education did not attract much interest among the majority of white church members, who formed the bulk of the readership of the church journals at that time.

The appointment of the Commission certainly did not go unnoticed in other quarters. The editor of an influential weekly newspaper, Ilanga laseNatal¹⁰ noted that the terms of the Commission were "tainted with political and racial theories" which implied that education for Africans

... must be for a specific position that he must occupy in our society ... African educationists are alert and ready to fight their battle ... Africans in this country are

9. It has not been possible to consult copies of the Southern Cross, the journal of the Roman Catholic Church, so the reaction from that denomination is not known.

10. Established in 1903, and described by Switzer as "one of the major outlets for moderate opinion in the history of the Black press" (Switzer, 1979:39).

fully aware of what is going on in other parts of the world. They do not want to be left behind. And they know that one of the weapons is to get the best and highest that education can offer. For this reason they will not accept apartheid in education (Ilanga laseNatal, 9.4.1949).

The Torch¹¹ noted that Eiselen was a person who made no secret of his support for 'total and complete apartheid', and suggested that that was the reason for his appointment to the 'position of honour' on the Commission. "The findings of the Commission are a foregone conclusion. The Commission is obviously a farcical one" (Torch, 7.2.1949).

Speaking at the Natal Teachers' Society Conference in 1949, Senator Edgar Brookes¹² expressed his opinion on the Commission, saying that it had

... an underlying motive not immediately apparent on the surface. It was a political attempt to make use of education as a means of training the Native to keep his subservient place in a caste society (Natal Daily News, 21.7.1949).

A somewhat cynical response came from Mr J M Nhlapo¹³. Rejecting the decision of the Transvaal Branch of the ANC to refuse to give evidence to a Commission "appointed by the present government with intent to whittle

11. Official organ of the NEUM: "One of the more significant efforts to co-ordinate black protest groups prior to 1960" (Switzer, 1979:61).

12. Founder member of the SAIRR and one of the 'Native Representatives' in the Senate from 1937-1952 (Who's Who of Southern Africa, 1953:159).

13. Principal of the Methodist Institution at Boitshoko, and member of the TATA Committee which submitted a memorandum to the Eiselen Commission.

down the content and quality of African education", Nhlapo urged TATA to voice its opposition to any plans to lower the standard of African education. Otherwise the Association might be accused later of not having told the Government that it disapproved of the Government's intentions:

Let us put this boycott steak in an ice-chest and tell the government what we want and what we do not want, and we can then with a clear conscience and an enhanced morale go and protest when our views have been ignored, and what we have not asked for, is being hurled at us (Bantu World, 14.5.1949).

Another Methodist, Mr N Honono¹⁴, noted in an editorial of Teachers' Vision, that there were no Africans appointed to the Eiselen Commission, and suggested that this was indicative of the attitude of white South Africans "that the Africans have not yet reached the stage of knowing what is good for themselves." He continued:

In this field, the first experiment of 'apartheid' on a large scale is going to be made. If this vaunted policy of 'apartheid' proves successful in the sphere of education - the very soul of a people - what hope have we of existence? ... I make bold to prophecy [sic] that a storm of protest, throughout the country, will greet recommendations that savour of Kaffir education (Teachers' Vision 15(3), 1949:3).

Outspoken reaction also came from the Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA), to which many Methodists belonged. The TLSA insisted that there should be no

14. At that time editor of the CATA journal, Teachers' Vision, and member of the Board of African Education of the Methodist Church.

segregation in education and no education to reinforce the concepts of domination or subservience. It was alleged, in the memorandum submitted to the Commission, that it was "the purpose and the intention of the Commission to collect such evidence as will 'prove' that the African is inferior and to formulate a system of education which will prepare him more effectively for subservience in society." Anything that purported to be educational but was divided on racial lines was rejected: "We are interested only in the education of South Africans, of all colours or 'races', for full and equal citizenship in a democracy" (BC 282. Memo 68).

Several questions relevant to mission education were posed in the League's journal, with the suggestion that these questions would have been far more relevant to an enquiry into African education than the ones which were posed by the Commission:

What role does the mission church play in the schooling of Non-Whites? Is the church really so benevolent and altruistic? In how far is the church working hand-in-glove with the State? In how far does the church genuinely wish for a secular school system? Is the State's interest in maintaining church control of schools financial or ideological?" (Educational Journal 20(15), 1949:14).

This is not the place to consider the implications of such questions in detail, but it is interesting to note that there seems to have been no response to them from any of the churches. A body such as the Methodist Board

of African Education could have devoted time, with profit, to the consideration of such questions.

Another body on which Methodists were represented was the Interdenominational African Ministers Federation.¹⁵ At its meeting in Queenstown in April 1949, a resolution was passed condemning "the appointment of a Commission to particularly investigate on [sic] Native Education. The suspicion that the Commission would aim at lowering its present standard is found justifiable" (Imvo Zabantsundu, 28.5.1949).

Reactions of Methodist Leaders

When one considers the extensive involvement of the Methodist Church in mission education¹⁶, it is surprising to find that of the 158 schools, institutions and other centres which, according to the list at the back of the Eiselen Commission Report, were visited by the Commissioners, only ten are clearly identifiable as being under the control of the Methodist Church.¹⁷

From the list of people who presented evidence to the Commission, the names of thirty-one Methodist clergy and

15. Among the office bearers at national and local level were the Revs Z R Mahabane, S S Seane, J M Letlabika and A N Mncube.

16. In 1948, the Methodist Church had responsibility for 1338 schools with 3 816 teachers and 175 770 scholars.

17. See Appendix F: I

laypersons have been identified.¹⁸ Some of these people gave evidence in their capacity as ministers, principals, teachers or school managers; others had a special interest in African education through the jobs they held, or through their involvement in welfare organisations. Even if further inquiries were to lead to the doubling of that number of Methodists, it remains a small percentage of the total number of people who submitted evidence.

A general lack of interest in the work of the Commission is evident from the Minutes of the meetings of the Board of African Education¹⁹ and of the annual Conference.

The Board usually met once a year, and there is no mention of the Commission in the Minutes of either the 1949 or the 1950 meetings. In the Report of the Missionary Committee tabled at the 1949 Conference, it was recorded that a Committee had been appointed by the Church to prepare a statement for presentation to the Eiselen Commission²⁰, and that the Committee "had been well received, when making their representations to the Commission" (CL: MS 15,388. Report of the Missionary Committee, Conference 1949).

18. See Appendix F: II.

19. The Board of African Education of the Methodist Church replaced the Advisory Committee for Institutions in 1947, and was elected annually thereafter to see to the affairs of the African schools and Institutions. Members included the President and Secretary of the Conference, the Principals of the Institutions run by the Church, and several African members. In 1947, there were 22 members, of whom 16 served ex officio.

20. See Appendix H.

In the 1950 Minutes of Conference it was noted that "the findings of the Commission on Native Education are expected towards the end of this year" (Conference. Minutes, 1950:91). The following year, the hope was expressed that the Eiselen Commission and the School Feeding Commission would pave the way for "a far more realistic approach" to African education.

Until education has become possible, and in due time, compulsory for all African children, the presently existing evil of juvenile crime and lawlessness must spread to the detriment of the whole community (Conference. Minutes, 1951:139).

In the official newspaper of the Methodist Church, the South African Weekly, there was no comment at all on the work of the Commission.²¹

The Governor of Healdtown, the Rev E W Grant, noted in his 1949 Annual Report that the Commissioners had visited the Institution, and that Healdtown had "been represented in evidence given on behalf of the Methodist Church of South Africa and the Cape Advisory Board for Native Education²²" (Healdtown, 1949:10). In the 1950 Report he recorded that there had been few developments in African education during the year, and suggested that the Government was waiting for the Report of the "strong commission on Native Education". Of this Report, Grant said that "its recommendations are likely to be far-

21. The South African Weekly ceased publication in 1951.

22. Rev R H Shepherd and Mr C D Zulu (Lovedale), Rev William Arnott (Blythswood), Rev E W Grant (Healdtown), and Mr A White (Umtata) served on the Committee of the Cape Advisory Board which gave evidence to the Commission (BC 282. Memo 214).

reaching, and they will probably bring about changes in the relations between Church and State in the realm of African Education" (Healdtown, 1950:1).

In fact, since the Eiselen Report was not tabled in Parliament until February 1952, the new Governor of Healdtown, the Rev S G Pitts, in his first Annual Report, noted again that they were waiting for the Report, although there had been indications by then that "certain radical changes" were being recommended. Nevertheless, he maintained a positive outlook:

As a result of the Commission's report and subsequent legislation based upon it some adjustments may be called for, some changes required to be made. Yet be they never so radical, never so thorough-going, our task in its essence remains unchanged - by the grace and power that is given unto us in the exercise of our talents to send forth into the wider world men and women of God 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works' (Healdtown, 1951:17).

Two items in the Archives of the Transvaal District of the Methodist Church, while making no reference to the Eiselen Commission, indicate a growing concern with the attitude of the Transvaal Education Department (TED) towards Methodist mission schools at that time. In a letter to Dr J B Webb, Chairman of the Transvaal District, on the TED's attitude to the establishment of a Methodist school in the new location at Natalspruit (Germiston), the Rev Ernest Beaud²³ wrote:

23. Minister in the Witwatersrand Mission, which controlled all African work on the Witwatersrand at that time.

In my opinion, the TED's attitude must be regarded as a direct threat against our school ... It is also a threat to Native Education in general as, so it appears, the TED would rather see no school at all rather than have Mission Schools ... the TED had claimed all the sites reserved for schools [in the new township] for themselves.²⁴

Beaud was presumably sceptical as to whether the TED would be able to provide all the necessary schools in the new township, hence his comment about "no school at all".

In the 1951 African and Day Schools Synod Committee Report, concern was expressed over the fact that "persuasion and other means of discrimination [were] used by Departmental officials against Methodist schools, and special consideration [was] given to communities and schools which broke away from the control of the Church" (TD: Schools General Correspondence. Synod Report, 1951). If such schools were given preferential treatment by the Department, it is not surprising to find in the Transvaal District files a number of requests from schools to be transferred to the control of the TED.

The Church leadership in the Transvaal was being given clear indications that the Church's education programme was under attack, but these warnings did not seem to influence in any significant way the official responses to the Eiselen Commission. Webb did not, as far as is known, give evidence to the Commission at all.

24. Beaud to Webb, 20.6.1950 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

Methodist Witnesses to the Commission

Evidence received by the Commission from Methodist witnesses was presented in one of three ways: the official memorandum of the Methodist Church, written evidence from individual Methodists, and oral evidence.

It appears that the official memorandum was drawn up from responses received from those working at the Institutions or managing schools. The Rev John Minty, Governor of Kamastone at that time, recalls having sent a memorandum to the Board of African Education (Interview, 9.5.1990), while Mr Charles Jackson, the Acting Principal of Kilnerton, noted in his memorandum that he had not answered the first six questions²⁵ "following the instructions received from the Methodist Church of South Africa, which has a committee engaged in considering these specific questions in order to give an answer reflecting the views of the Methodist Church of South Africa as a whole" (BC 282. Memo 168).

The Commission, during its Natal tour, interviewed a deputation consisting of five ministers - the Revs Edward W Grant (President of the Conference and Governor of Healdtown), Cecil C Harris (Past-President of the Conference and General Missionary Secretary), J Wesley Hunt (Governor of Indaleni), Seth M Mokitimi (Chaplain

25. See Appendix G.

and House Master at Healdtown) and Jotham C Mvusi (Durban African Circuit): it would appear that these were the men responsible for drawing up the memorandum. All five men were members of the Board of African Education, but the Board itself seems to have been bypassed completely: the annual meeting of the Board was held each September, too late to meet the official deadline for the submission of evidence to the Eiselen Commission. It was evidently not deemed necessary on this occasion to convene a special meeting of the Board to formulate the official Methodist response to the Commission. (An extraordinary meeting was called in April 1954 to discuss the implementation of the Bantu Education Act).

In addition, written memoranda from a number of individual Methodists are on record. The Rev William S Michell wrote from Heilbron, where he had spent three years, noting that he was "interested in Native Education ... [and] in fairly close contact with primary and secondary schools" (BC 282. Memo 69). Another memorandum came from the "Methodist Mission, Tayside, Natal", and although unsigned, probably originated from the Rev Irvine N Nyembezi, who had been stationed there for six years (BC 282. Memo 160). A detailed memorandum was also submitted by the Rev Enoch E Kuzwayo to the Commissioners at the time of the Natal Tour (BC 282. A1.19:203). He had been working in the Vryheid Circuit for nine years. These two appear to have been the only

spontaneous responses from African Methodist ministers to the Commission.²⁶

Both Mr Kenneth Hartshorne and Mr Charles Jackson, principals of the Kilnerton Training School and High School respectively, submitted memoranda, as did Mr J T Heyns, head of the Moroka Training and High Schools, Thaba'Nchu (BC 282. Memos 101, 168 and 106). Mrs Anne Cook, from the Kilnerton Training School, submitted detailed recommendations, based on her findings during a visit to colleges in the United States (BC 282. Memo 41).

Several Methodists presented oral evidence during the various Tours undertaken by the Commission between August and November 1949. The records which are available of the evidence given during those Tours are somewhat sketchy, and presumably only record the highlights of the conversations: nevertheless they do give some indication of the thinking of a variety of Methodists on the question of African education.

The Orange Free State Tour report recorded evidence from Dr James S Moroka²⁷, who served on the Moroka School Committee, Mr R Cingo²⁸, principal of the United Bantu School, Kroonstad and member of the Board of African

26. Kuzwayo and Nyembezi appeared, together with a Mr Msomi, before the Commissioners at Dundee in October 1949, in order to give oral evidence as well.

27. At that time, President-General of the ANC.

28. See Appendix B.

Education, and the Rev Zaccheus R Mahabane²⁹, manager of the Methodist Schools in the Kroonstad district, where he had been working for eight years. These three also submitted written memoranda at the time of the interviews. Heyns was interviewed by the Commission, with particular reference to the position of 'white' teachers in African schools.

The 'Natal' Tour included Kokstad, where the Rev Kenneth Seeby gave evidence: he had been stationed at Bizana for six years, and served on the Ludeke Methodist School Committee. In Natal, in addition to a well-documented interview with the official delegation of the Methodist Church at Indaleni, an interview was recorded with the Rev Walter Gcabashe, stationed at Edendale and a member of the Indaleni Committee.

During the Eastern Cape Tour interviews were recorded with Mr J H Dugard, at that time Inspector of Schools, but principal of Healdtown High School from 1932-1940, and Mr N Honono, principal of the Nqabara Methodist Secondary School, member of the Board of African Education, and of the CATA delegation which met the Commissioners.

A number of Methodists gave evidence during the final Tour through the Transvaal: Mr C Jackson (in the absence of Hartshorne on leave), Mr Junius M Lekgetha, an ex-

29. See Appendix B.

President of TATA, the Rev Deryck P Dugmore, Governor of Boitshoko Institution near Ventersdorp, Dr Jacob M Nhlapo, principal of Boitshoko High School, and the Rev Jeremiah M Letlabika, Methodist minister in Ventersdorp.

In addition, in May 1949, the Commissioners visited Healdtown, where they met the High School staff - six African and eleven 'white' teachers, including Mr W Dale, principal of the Teachers' Training School, and Mr George Caley, principal of the High School, whose comments are on record. During the course of this Tour, visits were also paid to Methodist primary schools in East London and Butterworth, to the Clarkebury and Shawbury Institutions, and finally to Indaleni, where the Commissioners spoke with the Governor, the Rev J Wesley Hunt, as well as the sixteen 'white' and eleven African teachers working there.

The Official Memorandum of the Methodist Church of South Africa

The official Methodist Church memorandum³⁰ commenced with a statement about the number of schools under the control of the Church in 1948: 1312 Primary Schools, with 3 546 teachers and 168 708 scholars, and 26 High, Secondary, Training or Industrial Schools with 270 teachers and 7 062 scholars (BC 282. Memo 92). The

30. See Appendix H.

imbalance in the provision of primary and secondary schooling for African children is clearly reflected in these figures: in 1948, for every fifty Methodist primary schools, there was one school providing post-primary schooling, and for every twenty-four children attending primary school, there was one at a post-primary school.

In the responses to the first eight questions, the terms 'Native' and 'African' were used interchangeably without any comment; the concept 'Native Education' was not questioned at all, although it was stated that "the guiding principles and aims of Native Education are the same as for any racial group ... that every child shall have the opportunity of receiving sound education, up to the maximum of his capacity for receiving it" (BC 282. Memo 92: question 1). The idea that 'Natives' formed a 'separate and independent race' was rejected, as was the attempt to define 'racial characteristics' and 'special qualities and aptitudes', although a very generalised statement on the latter did conclude the reply to question four: "Africans belong to hardy and brave races, with a deep sense of loyalty and justice and a remarkable capacity for mass obedience. Courage, patience and adaptability and in suitable circumstances, initiative, are found well-developed among them." In the answers to questions five and six, on 'social heritage' and 'social conditions', emphasis was laid on the differing needs of Africans living in urban, peri-

urban and rural areas. The response to question eight on the 'future careers of the Native' itself raises further questions:

In relation to the population of nearly eight million African people ... and approximately two million Europeans, there exists scope for all types of work. Africans should be able to supply all services for a normal society. Accordingly the scope of Native Education should be widened from time to time to meet all requirements.

Was the emphasis there on the possibility of "all types of work", or on the "supply of services"? What was envisaged by "a normal society"?

The reply to question seven summed up the Church's responses to the first section of the questionnaire:

Based on the principle that Education develops natural ability, a primary objective of Native Education should be to make literate all Africans. The State should continue to co-operate with the Churches in this endeavour and together provide the additional facilities as required. In addition to the subjects taught at present, an increasing number of trades and skills and professions and arts should be taught, and opportunities should be found for the employment of such students on the completion of their courses. Account should be taken of the legitimate aspirations of the Africans themselves in all these matters.

The answers to the remainder of the questions dealt with the more practical aspects of African education, and arose out of the Church's experience in the field. Problems were noted with the "pre-occupation with exam results" (question 9), and with inadequate accommodation, equipment and staffing because of lack of funds. The importance attached to the provision of Christian

education by Christian teachers was emphasised, as well as the need for manual training to stress "the dignity of labour" (question 11). No comment was passed about the system of Provincial control of education, but it was recommended that the work of the Union Advisory Board should be expanded (question 14). Predictably, the response to the question on financing was that "the growing need calls for more generous treatment in the form of greater financial aid from Union Government Funds" (question 15). The Government was urged to fund all education in the same way, viz. "from the General Revenue of the Country". Comments were made about the existing systems of school organisation and administration, and various recommendations put forward (questions 12 & 13).

Such was the gist of the official Methodist statement on African education. The response to question one - on "the guiding principles and aims of Native education" - was later used almost word for word in the 1952 Conference statement on the Eiselen Commission Report.³¹

31. See Appendix D.

Responses of Methodists on Selected Issues

In reading through the rest of the evidence presented to the Commission, one is struck by the diversity of responses from individual Methodists. None commented on the underlying assumptions of the questionnaire or rejected explicitly the notion of "Native education".

Heyns, in fact, suggested the possibility of applying the "apartheid-beleid" positively, in order to give 'the Native' the possibility of serving his own community (BC 282. Memo 106). The majority used the questionnaire as the basis for a point-by-point response, questions being omitted where the respondent had no experience of a particular topic.

When the Commissioners visited Indaleni, they spoke with the Governor, the Rev J Welsey Hunt. He indicated his belief that

... churches have no common education policy. All Missionary Institutions bear the mark of the men who established them and have developed in different directions. Our policy is largely guided by the wishes of the Native people as expressed through Native Conferences and Synods (BC 282. A1.29:34).

However, it seems doubtful whether the Church synods were seen by African members as the appropriate places to criticise mission education. The views expressed by Methodists active in the teachers' organisations were certainly not reflected in the Church's statements on aims and policy.

Control of Schools - Church or State?

A variety of individual reactions to the question of Church or State control emerged from the evidence. Some favoured the transfer of primary schools to the state (Michell, Hartshorne, Hunt, Caley, Jackson and Seeby), some suggested a total takeover by the State (Cingo, Mahabane³², Heyns³³ and Gcabashe reporting the views of 'teachers'), while others were adamant that it was vital for the church to retain control of the training institutions and boarding establishments (Caley, Hunt, Hartshorne, Jackson and Dugard). The Commission noted that the African teachers they met at Indaleni were of the opinion that "these Mission institutions still serve a good purpose and are better than secular schools. The teachers have to work harder than in Government schools" (BC 282. A1.29:34).

The President of the Conference, the Rev E W Grant, favoured "the continuation of a strong, clear Christian foundation for education ... Under the present conditions the church would not be inclined to relinquish control of schools" (BC 282. A1.19:95).

32. He claimed in the memorandum submitted to the Commission and dated 30.8.1949, that the Synod [presumably of the Kimberley and Bloemfontein District where he was working] had "accepted the principle of state control of Native education" (BC 282. A1.18: Annexure AA).

33. Heyns is quoted as having said: "Twee base veroorsaak altyd moeilikheid ... As die twee verskil is die naturel baie gou om moeilikheid te veroorsaak" (BC 282. A1.18:107).

Control of Schools - Union or Provincial?

The official Methodist respondents, when questioned about their views on Union or Provincial control, "stated that they were unable to express an opinion" (BC 282. A1.19:95) - despite the fact that this had been a hotly debated issue for close on twenty years. Hartshorne, on the other hand, was quite clear in his preference for Union control through the Union Education Department, not the Native Affairs Department. This preference, however, did not imply a state takeover of African education:

In the present stage of development of Native Education one of the greatest tragedies that could happen would be the secularization of the system. Many mistakes have been made by the Missions from time to time, but South Africa would be a very much poorer place without the devotion and service of the Missions in this sphere; at the moment, of course, even materially the State cannot do without them. Nor will it ever get far with the native people unless they feel that the Missions have been fully consulted (BC 282. Memo 101).

Methodist Influence in Schools

Some of the confusion in people's minds over the future role of the Methodist Church in African education may be attributed to two factors: firstly, that the Methodist Church already had very little say over the nature of the education offered in the schools which were registered in its name; and secondly, that the churches had tended increasingly to play down their

denominational differences in the field of African education.

As the State had provided more funding for education, so the churches had been obliged to conform increasingly to its demands. Since the late nineteenth century, the State had prescribed the curricula to be used, paid the salaries of all approved teachers and, to a large extent, determined their conditions of service. Government inspectors were sent out to ensure that church schools conformed to the required standards: inspection reports dealt with matters such as school attendance (both numbers of students present and the hours of attendance), teacher competence, adequacy of the school buildings, and student progress. The 'Methodism' of the schools was confined to the fact that the manager was a Methodist minister, and that the local Methodist minister was allowed access to the school if he wished to conduct religious instruction classes at the school. While preference was given to Methodist teachers when they applied for posts at Methodist schools, the staff at the bigger Methodist schools was usually representative of a number of different denominations.

In addition, a number of schools which were designated 'Methodist' or 'Wesleyan' had not been established in the first place as Church schools. Some had been established by a local community, which then chose the Methodist Church as the school's sponsor in order to

ensure registration with the relevant Provincial education department. One such initiative is recorded in correspondence between the Rev Nelson Kola, of Middelburg, Transvaal, and the Chairman of the District, the Rev Dr J B Webb: "By this letter they [the local community] are giving to the Methodist Church the school together with the building ... They wish if things go well that we should take over immediately."³⁴ Had the Methodist Church turned down the request, the Chief would presumably have approached another denomination: it seems unlikely that there was any strong commitment to the school functioning as a Methodist school. It was a 'marriage of convenience'. However, the reputation of the Methodist Church in that community would surely have been severely tarnished had it refused to accept the school which was being offered to it.

It would seem, then, that the majority of Methodist primary and secondary schools were really Methodist in name only, and even at those Institutions which are remembered as having been Methodist Mission Institutions, staff and students came from a variety of different denominational backgrounds. The Commissioners noted during their Tours that neither Healdtown nor Indaleni was an exclusively Methodist Institution. Hunt, Governor of Indaleni, did, however, stress that "all are in sympathy with the evangelistic outlook" (BC 282. (A1.29:34)).

34. Kola to Webb, 20.7.1950 (TD: Schools Correspondence).

The influence of the General Missionary Conference, and later of the Christian Council and the Ciskeian Missionary Council, may well be discerned in the move away from denominational emphases in African education.³⁵

This may to some extent explain why, when the churches had to respond individually as denominations to the Eiselen Commission, they - with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church - paid little attention to denominational matters, but stressed their commitment to the provision of education with a clearly Christian ethos. It was noted earlier that the Christian Council had anticipated playing an important role in the shaping of the responses of individual denominational responses to the Commission.

The denominational emphasis did surface in relation to the question of boarding hostels though, as these were seen as an important arm of the churches' missionary work, and places where new church members could be won and nurtured. Former students of Healdtown, responding to Peppeta's³⁶ questionnaire, commented that Healdtown had given them "sound Christian principles": one remarked that on leaving Healdtown, "I was a complete

35. Complaints about preference being given to applicants who belonged to the denomination which ran the school were raised by the teachers' associations from time to time; Gcabashe mentioned that he had experienced denominational competition between schools; and the Eiselen Report made much of this problem. Nevertheless, the evidence seems to suggest that denominationalism was not as significant a problem as some had claimed.

36. A past student from Healdtown who investigated the way Healdtown influenced the lives of students.

Methodist". Another recalled that "they ... stressed that the main aim of Healdtown was to educate people so as to help the spread of Methodism" (Peppeta, 1989).

The one responsibility which the Church did have to fulfill with regard to the schools which were registered in its name, was to provide managers for those schools: the paperwork involved in such a task was considerable, and a number of those who gave evidence to the Commission, raised the problem of overburdened school managers. Mokitimi commented in his oral evidence that too few men had to supervise too many schools, and that "a man sometimes had to manage schools because he happened to be appointed to a certain area and not because he had the necessary gift for the work" (BC 282. A1.19:96). Seeby commented that managers resented the fact that they were required to be "unpaid clerks of the department" (BC 282. A1.19:25), but had so little authority that their visits to schools were a waste of time. Michell suggested that managers should be appointed by the Education Departments from a list of volunteers (BC 282. Memo 69). During an interview, Gcabashe

... agreed with Dr Gerdener that the spiritual work of the minister was often neglected because of the load of administrative work he was burdened with as school manager: at the same time, however, the schools themselves saw little of the minister because he felt that his church work needed to take precedence over the schools work (BC 282. A 1.19:46).

That school administration was a real problem is also clear from correspondence in the Transvaal District files relating to schools: the management of schools took up an inordinate amount of time both of ministers and the District Chairman.

Financing of Education

On the question of the financing of education, it was generally agreed that there should be no extra taxation imposed on Africans to finance African education. Mokitimi noted that many Africans were "presently taxing themselves continuously for the betterment of education" (BC 282. A1.19:97). Seeby, however, expressed the opinion that, provided it was clear that the extra money was being spent on education, "the native would be willing to pay" (BC 282. A1.19:23). A number of people commented on the inability of the churches to keep up with the financial demands of mission education (MCSA delegation, Mahabane, Dugard). Mahabane noted that, if it were not for this problem, he would certainly not recommend the State takeover of education. When asked by the Commissioners whether Africans "would be prepared to pay a small education tax", Mahabane responded: "As long as education is free for Europeans it should be free for natives" (BC 282. A1.18:135).

Moroka, in giving oral evidence, took the Government to task on its attitude towards funding of education:

The Africans should be given more education than the Europeans because he [sic] has less land ... That is not possible unless the govt. gets rid of the idea that it has no money. Education for any govt. is a sound investment. Why, they have enough money for Police and prisons (BC 282. A1.18:95).

He recommended the financing of African education on a per caput basis, where subsidies would be calculated according to the number of children in school, instead of a system whereby lump sums were allocated to 'Native' education, regardless of the number of children or teachers in the schools.

The Position of 'White' Teachers in African Education

Heyns was convinced that white teachers had an important role to play in African education, and deplored the unsatisfactory conditions of service which applied to them. Dugard noted how difficult it was for the churches to find suitable people to run the Institutions - "very many go against their will to take over a big and difficult job" (BC 282. A1.20:16) - and suggested that it might be better if such appointments were made, and financed, by the Education Departments. In the Commission's report on its visit to Healdtown, it was noted that it was the Institution's policy "to develop greater responsibility for African teachers, eventually even for positions of Governor. Time is, however, not ripe for this. Native teachers prefer to teach in urban areas" (BC 282. A1.29:4).

Syllabus Differentiation and 'Adapted' Education

The question of whether or not to use the same syllabi in 'European' and 'African' schools had been a vexed one for the best part of a century, with preferences being voiced by educators and others for and against 'adapted' education and 'differentiated' syllabi (Loram, 1917; Murray, 1938; Phelps Stokes, 1934). In general, Africans themselves were totally opposed to any suggestion that their children should receive an education which was in any way different from that being given to 'white' children, while the arguments in favour of differentiation tended to come from those responsible for providing education for African children, the majority being 'white' missionaries and teachers.

In the evidence presented to the Commission, Grant recognised that it was unrealistic to "expect the African to be satisfied with any differentiation" (BC 282. A1.19:92), while Hunt, on the other hand, commented that the social differences which existed between Africans and Europeans needed to be "taken into consideration in planning the curriculum" (BC 282. A1.19:93). Mahabane, Cingo, Letlabika and Nhlapo firmly rejected any differentiation, or simplification of curricula, but Michell³⁷

37. "The present system is inconsistent with a fair and just 'apartheid' [sic] policy. Why force the European standard upon native children?" (BC 282. Memo 69).

and Seeby³⁸ both favoured an adapted programme. Here the division is clear in the nature of the responses from 'black' and 'white' Methodists.

Conclusion

While the responses to the Eiselen Commission of the Methodists quoted here are similar to those submitted by other witnesses, certain features of the Methodist responses seem worthy of comment.

The official memorandum prepared by the Church leadership was couched in carefully worded and unemotive language: this one would expect from such a document. However, it is interesting to note that none of the other memoranda considered in this section were at all 'strongly worded'. Even Mahabane resorted to the use of the phrase 'in my humble opinion', and referred to 'Native education'. One might be tempted to assume that this was in keeping with the practice of the times, of addressing Government Departments and Commissions in a very respectful manner. By contrast, however, the executives of both CATA and the TLSA submitted memoranda in which they were outspokenly critical of the implications they read into the questionnaire.³⁹

38. "A scheme more suited to Africans could be devised ... Education should enable them to become useful members of their own society and to develop an African consciousness" (BC 282. A1.19:23).

39. See BC 282. Memos 90 and 68.

The second observation concerning the Methodist responses is that all the 'white' respondents seem to have accepted without question the underlying apartheid philosophy which was embedded in both the terms of reference of the Commission and the questions which were posed in the questionnaire. One of the tragedies of the story of the Methodist Church's involvement in African education has surely been the failure of its leadership to listen and respond seriously to the experiences and statements of fellow Methodists, who were the main targets of the increasingly discriminatory legislation being written into the Statute Books in the early years of Nationalist Party rule. Had they done so, it seems unlikely that the racist notions which were evident in the questionnaire would have been allowed to go virtually unchallenged. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that African Methodists, responding as Church members, failed to deal with this issue either.

In this section there is some evidence of the 'white liberal/black radical' division in the Church which was referred to earlier. Letlabika noted that many of the lay African members of Conference were teachers⁴⁰, and this was probably true of the Synods as well. Despite this, the sort of sentiments being expressed in teachers' meetings appear not to have surfaced in the courts of the Church; or if they did, they were not taken seriously by

40. Letter to the author, July 1990.

those predominantly 'white' gatherings. Throughout the Forties, calls were made for the churches to hand over their African schools to the State, by those who believed that all education should be the responsibility of the State, and that the State would provide better facilities than the churches were able to do. The churches were also strongly criticised by some for their role in upholding the status quo and perpetuating 'white' privilege and domination. Nevertheless there is little evidence that the Methodist leadership engaged in serious discussion with its critics: such attacks tended, rather, to put the leaders on the defensive.⁴¹

It would appear that it may be unrealistic to try and draw out of the evidence a clearly 'Methodist response' to the Eiselen Commission. The existence of such bodies as the Christian Council, the Ciskeian Missionary Council, the Association of European Teachers in Native Education, and the Association of Heads of Native Institutions, suggests that the churches - and in particular the English-speaking Protestant churches - were united by their common involvement in African education, rather than divided by their denominational allegiances. A detailed study of evidence submitted by witnesses from any of the other denominations would probably yield a similar range of responses to those

41. See, for example, the pamphlet, "The Truth about Communism", published in 1954, as the Church's response to "unscrupulous and untruthful propaganda directed against our mission work" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.5.1954: 2).

highlighted in this section. Both the ministers and the laypersons who chose to give evidence before the Commission did so in the light of their own personal experiences in African education, and their own understanding of the philosophy of, and rationale for, education - or 'native education'. There had never been articulated a specifically 'Methodist' philosophy of education to guide their thinking or their actions in this sphere. This was in marked contrast to the Roman Catholic Church, which saw itself as having a fundamental obligation to provide education for the children of its members.

CHAPTER 4

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EISELEN COMMISSION REPORT

South Africa in the Early Fifties

The new Nationalist Government wasted no time in implementing its policies after it came to power in 1948. As has been noted already, the appointment of the Eiselen Commission, its terms of reference, and the credentials of its members, were seen by many to be clear indicators of the intentions of the Government concerning the future of 'native' education. Before that Commission even published its Report, however, a number of new laws had been passed, designed to put an immediate end to such intermingling of 'races' as had occurred, and to set the course for future 'race relationships' in South Africa. These laws included the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949), the Population Registration, Immorality, Group Areas and Suppression of Communism Acts (1950), and the Bantu Authorities and Prevention of Illegal Squatting Acts (1951).

After 1950, those 'whites' who opposed the ruling Party formed an alliance, it being clear that they would have to present a united front to the electorate if they were to recapture power from the Nationalists in the 1953 General Election. When they failed to achieve

their aim, the alliance fell apart, and the Liberal Party was established in 1953.

Robertson has suggested that on many issues there was little to distinguish the ruling party from the official opposition: "on the fundamental principles of political and social segregation the United Party was in total agreement with the Nationalists", although "on the question of economic segregation, the United Party was fundamentally opposed to the Government" (Robertson, 1971:42-43). She continued:

Except for the question of economic segregation, it was not theory but method which aroused the United Party against the Government over the laws to implement apartheid. The Opposition rarely challenged the purpose of such laws ... But they constantly expressed misgivings because the methods which the Government proposed to use entailed the infringement of liberty (Robertson, 1971:44-45).

Among 'black' South Africans, the ANC was the dominant political organization of the period, but there was division within the ranks of that organization as well. Considerable tensions had developed between the more radical supporters of the Youth League and the older, more conservative members who had traditionally provided the leadership of the organization. The AAC and NEUM were other politically oriented groups which drew support from 'black' South Africans in the period under consideration.

Included in the Methodist Church membership were supporters of all the above political persuasions, as well as some members who were not aligned with any officially recognized grouping at all. The statements put out by the Church at this period seem to indicate, however, that they were formulated by people who were aligned to a significant extent with the 'white' opposition grouping, who favoured polite protests to the Government rather than open confrontation. Certainly calls for 'civil disobedience' and 'non-cooperation' did not appear on the Church's agenda until 1988 when the Methodist Church endorsed the "Standing for the Truth Campaign" initiated by the South African Council of Churches (Conference. Minutes, 1988:305).

Each year the Conference of the Methodist Church issued a 'Statement on Public Questions', and an 'Address of the Conference to the Members of the Church': those issued in 1950 and 1951 expressed "deep concern", "strongly protested", and "deplored" the measures taken by the Nationalist Government to entrench apartheid, but at the same time made reference to the possible "merits of the ideal of apartheid", and noted that the Conference was "fully aware of the peculiar difficulties which any Government today faces" (Conference. Minutes, 1950:145-147, 171-174; 1951:138-140, 158-161).

The 1951 'Statement' commented on the fact that "in spite of protestations to the contrary", legislative

measures had been placed on the Statute Book which had contributed to "the growing deterioration in racial relationships" (Conference. Minutes, 1951: 138).

In the 1951 Conference 'Address', "the increase of racial and political bitterness" was "deeply deplored". The 'Address' continued:

Though not a political body, we ... have taken notice of political policy and political issues ... It may even be our solemn duty, humbly and yet definitely, alone or in company, to oppose the morality of the State if it is contrary to what we believe is the will of God (Conference. Minutes, 1951:159).

The contrasting responses by 'blacks' and 'whites' - resistance or polite protest - to the developments during these years were echoed in the responses which the Eiselen Commission elicited after its publication in February 1952. Both the 'radical' and the 'liberal' organizations, including the churches, criticised and rejected many of the recommendations of the Report. The 'black' groups did, however, try to move beyond mere criticism, to the organization of active resistance to the implementation of the recommendations; the responses of the 'white' organizations were simply presented in the form of 'Findings', 'Observations' or 'Resolutions', which stopped short of suggesting any measures to thwart the implementation of the recommendations.

In the final analysis, neither approach had any significant effect: Bantu education was an essential element in the implementation of apartheid. The Government would tolerate no opposition to its policies. Molteno described it this way:

It [Bantu Education] was an attempt tightly articulated with a broader political strategy developed by the ruling class to defend its threatened order. The regime hoped [that] by so raping the children's minds they could nurture a stunted black proletariat with its political aspirations aborted at birth (Molteno, 1981:31).

The Eiselen Report Tabled in Parliament

About nine months before the Report became available to the public, the Minister of Education, Arts and Science, Mr J H Viljoen, addressed the Senate on the policy of his Department. He highlighted three major recommendations of the Report: that education must be seen as one of the factors which was essential for the building up of local communities; that the existing provincial and mission control would have to be abolished, since it did not allow "the Bantu communities to take an effective share in the control of and responsibility for the education of their children"; and that education must in future "form a part of a co-ordinated plan for the development of the Native population" (Senate. Debates, 1951: col 2031).

Viljoen noted that it was the view of the Commissioners that "it is possible to convert Native education into an effective instrument for the uplifting of the Native population as a whole to a higher standard of living and to the fulfilment of a more productive role economically in the South African economy." They had therefore recommended "that a general plan of development for the Bantu peoples should be worked out, and that education of the Bantu should be so planned as to assist in the most effective way in the achievement of the envisaged goal" (col 2031).

The Minister indicated that the Commission had recommended that control of all African education should be transferred to the Native Affairs Department (NAD); that the African people should be required to increase their contributions to the financing of education; that the curriculum would have to be "brought into agreement with the general scheme of development" (col 2031); and that emphasis would be placed on the use of the mother tongue in education. All this would lead to the replacement of a school system "which aims at the cultural integration with the Europeans of a relatively small minority of Natives" (col 2032), with one which fitted in with the Government's plans. An initial four-year elementary course would eventually be made compulsory for all African children: this would be followed by another four-year primary school course, a higher or technical

course, and finally university education. He made it clear, though, that "the available places within all the categories except the first will be determined by the requirements of the general development scheme" (col 2032).

A number of senators responded to this announcement, which was the first indication anyone had been given of the nature of the Commission's recommendations. It must have become clear to the Minister that there was going to be strong opposition to the recommendations which he had outlined. Unfavourable comment was made by the opposition Senators on just about every point that he raised.

Senator Brookes objected strongly to the emphasis placed on a "general plan of development for the whole Native population" (col 2092), which had not been discussed either in Parliament, or with the African people themselves. Senator Hosking was unequivocal in his rejection of what the Minister had presented: "If the Minister is wise, he will leave this matter alone and consign it to the top of Table Mountain when the mists come over" (col 2154). In his reply, the Minister stressed that the Government had not accepted the Eiselen Report as policy, and that the Cabinet had not even seen the Report yet. "I just gave the information as a matter of interest and also to obtain

the views of honourable Senators on those recommendations" (col 2192).

The Parliamentary press reports on this discussion gave the general public and those involved in African education the first indication that drastic changes were in the pipeline. The Cape Times and the Argus reported very briefly on the proceedings in the Senate, as their main concern at that time was with the all-night debate on the Separate Representation of Voters Bill in the House of Assembly. Forum¹, however, reported at some length on Senator Brookes' response to the Minister:

Educationalists will object to the schools being made instruments for the carrying out of any political plan. Education does not exist to fit children into that place in society to which it shall please the government to call them ... No-one has the right to state in advance the lines on which a great people ought to develop, and then deliberately to restrict and guide their education so as to fit in with that conception.

When this attempt is made without any consultation with the leaders of the people concerned and without their consent, it becomes really a monstrous thing. No people possesses the right to dispose of the future of another people in this way (Forum, 4.5.1951).

Two months later the Minister presented the same summary of the Report to the House of Assembly at the time when the 'Native Vote' was being considered. In the ensuing debate, Mr M C de Wet Nel, the Member of Parliament who

1. A weekly journal which described itself as "South Africa's first constructive independent national review." It was published from 1938-1964.

had served on the Eiselen Commission, spelt out some of the underlying assumptions of the Report. He assured the House that the Nationalist Party had always been concerned about providing the "correct kind of education ... the best type of education for Natives, no [sic] inferior type of education lower than that for Europeans, but a type of education that will enable the Native to be of use to his own community" (Hansard, 1951: col 8980).

He emphasised the "absolute aimlessness" of 'Native' education, and explained why the Commission had demanded that the Native Affairs Department should take control of 'Native' education.

It demands primarily and emphatically that Native education shall be taken away from missionary bodies and from the provinces and that it shall be placed under the Central Government ... It is not a request, it is a demand ... If that demand is complied with it will give considerable satisfaction to the Native population (col 8081).

He also stressed the importance of 'Native' education being incorporated into a comprehensive development plan, which therefore made it essential that it should be administered by the Department which controlled all aspects of Native Affairs. On the question of financing, he had the following to say:

. So far the Native has made practically no contribution towards Native education ... He does not appreciate it. It is always argued: 'Yes, look, he pays indirect taxes'; but he knows nothing about that. He only appreciates a thing if he has to

take something out of his own pocket to pay for [sic] and if he has a say in the matter" (col 8982).

Mrs Ballinger² expressed reservations about the Report, noting that she was "dubious about the proposition that the education of the Native population should conform to a pattern of Native policy" (col 8962).

In his reply to the debate, the Minister pointed out that the Report would be studied by the Government during the parliamentary recess, and a reply formulated. He concluded by observing that because of the widely divergent views which existed on education within a multi-racial country, the School Feeding Scheme Commission and the Eiselen Commission had been appointed

... to examine this matter once and for all so that we can try to obtain a clear picture of what is in the interests of the Natives in connection with school feeding and education, and what is best for the country as a whole. That report is valuable and I anticipate that when it is considered it will throw a measure of light on the subject to enable us to get away from the confusion which has grown up as a result of the conditions which have existed until now (col 8995).

Nine months later, in February 1952, the Report was tabled in Parliament, and made available to the public. Even then it took some time for many to digest the

2. Native Representative in the House of Assembly from 1937-1960. She was the only person "to hold a seat for the entire period the scheme of Native Representation was in operation" (Robertson, 1971:26).

contents of the Report, and to grasp the implications of its recommendations.

Outline of the Report

As was to be expected, the 232 page Eiselen Commission Report faithfully reflected the Terms of Reference of the Commission. In the first two sections of the Report, the Commissioners summed up the existing situation in African education. On the basis of that summary, they were able to argue that if African education were to be set on a sound foundation, it was essential that these recommendations should be fully implemented.

Part One (paras 16-544) - "The Bantu and the Present System of Education" - detailed the history, culture and traditions of 'the Bantu', and traced the development of 'Bantu education'. Consideration was also given to how well pupils had 'achieved' under the existing system.

In Part Two (paras 545-753) - "Critical Appraisal of the Present System of Bantu Education" - consideration was given to criticisms raised by witnesses. Included in this section were comments on general and specific defects of the system, as well as wide-ranging criticism

of the different types of schools which provided education for African children.

The final section of the Report (paras 754-1054) - "Proposals and Recommendations" - provided what was virtually a blueprint for a new system of Bantu Education. This included a statement on the aims of Bantu Education, a proposed scheme for the complete reorganisation of Bantu Education, with detailed proposals on a range of topics, including the complete reorganisation of the administration of education under the control of a Division of Bantu Affairs, curriculum details, staff matters, and finance.

Murray crossed swords with the other Commissioners on a number of occasions, and in the end a final chapter of "dissentient remarks" was included in the Report. On Chapter VII ("Criticisms of the present system"), Murray commented: "A good many of the points of criticism brought forward ... were not raised in evidence or during the inquiry and embody the personal experience and views of members of the Commission who have had to do with Bantu education" (Eiselen . Commission Report, 1951:169). In the end, however, Murray differed on some of the details of the Report, but not on any fundamental issues (Hartshorne, 1953: 102).

Recommendations on the Future of Church Schools

Of particular interest to this study, are the comments, criticisms and recommendations which the Commissioners made about the role of the churches in African education.

In the survey of the 'Religious and Educational Development of the Bantu' (paras 106-118), it was noted that "the missionaries founded schools as an essential part of their work of evangelization" (para 106). That was immediately followed by critical comment on the fact that the school had developed as something apart from the life of the tribe, indicating clearly that the Commissioners found the current situation unacceptable.

The harmful effects of competition between denominations on the siting of schools and the training and employment of teachers was emphasised, and yet it was acknowledged that "in practice ... the schools tend to be interdenominational as far as the children and teachers are concerned" (para 115). Calls for the secularisation of schools were noted: Africans saw the Government schools as being better funded and equipped than mission schools, and pointed out that the majority of European schools were Government schools (para 118).

In paragraph 117 it was claimed that

... the most important trend in the educational and religious development of the Bantu over the last 100 years has been the growing desire of communities and parents to participate in the control of schools and churches.

Paragraphs 204-235 dealt with the question of the "Function of Bantu Education" from the perspectives of the State (paras 204-223), the religious bodies (paras 224-229), and the 'Bantu' (paras 230-235).

In paragraph 224, the question was posed: "Why have the churches supported Bantu education so zealously and has there been an evolution in their attitudes since their early pioneer efforts?" This was one question which the churches might usefully have pondered, as they responded in due course to the Report. No record has been found of any attempt to answer it.

Comment was passed on the use by the churches of "education as an aid to evangelization" (para 225), and on the tendency which had developed "to promote particular denominational interests" (para 227). As suggested in the previous chapter, the emphasis on the deleterious effects of denominational rivalry may have been somewhat misplaced in a consideration of mission education in the late Forties: most mission schools no longer bore the strong denominational imprints of former years. The statement in paragraph 228 was an attempt to justify the later recommendations. It was

asserted that the churches themselves were in favour of relinquishing their control of the schools:

As a consequence of the lessening of the churches' say in the schools an increasing number of churches favour the handing over of the schools to the State for they feel that if they freed themselves of the economic burden of the schools they could accomplish their real mission, viz, evangelization, more effectively. In this way they would also meet the growing demand from the Bantu for secular schools (para 228).

No attempt was made to clarify which churches were in favour, how large the "increasing number" was, nor on what conditions these churches would favour a hand-over to the State.

Under a general heading "Defects of the Present Machinery for the Co-ordination and Administration of Education", paragraphs 595-608 dealt with "The Role of Religious Bodies in the Present System of Bantu Education". The organisation and administration of mission schools was described as being "characterized by their multiplicity, their mutual rivalries, their overlap in distribution and function, and the heterogeneity of the school population they serve" (para 596).

Emphasis was again laid on the negative aspects of denominational control, including such problems as "interdenominational rivalry" (para 598), "wasteful duplication" (paras 599 and 602), "widely different conceptions as to the aims and practices of education"

(para 601), the growth of "polyglot institutions" which had lost their "local character and significance" (paras 603 and 604), and possible problems over denominational preference in teacher appointments, although it was conceded that complaints in this regard had been "strikingly few" (para 605).

The final paragraphs of this section dealt with the question of control of mission schools, and included a lengthy quote from the 1919 Report of the Commission on Native Education. How relevant the findings of that Commission were, in the light of the changes which had taken place over a period of thirty years, might well be questioned.

The matter of the control of schools was clearly one which exercised the minds of the Commissioners a great deal, and one on which, as was seen earlier, Eiselen himself had some very definite ideas. In paragraph 606, the churches were blamed for having done their work too well!

Perhaps the most serious criticism of control by religious bodies is that it has helped in the evolution of a system of education divorced from a system of local government. In the past the religious bodies provided a form of local control of schools which was trustworthy and responsible. This encouraged the State to neglect the creation of a local authority (para 606).

The importance of local involvement in and control of education was taken further in the following section

where the contribution of the 'Bantu' "in the form of labour, material and money" (para 609) was commended. Regret was expressed that such contributions were "not acknowledged and encouraged officially as a recognized part of the organization of education" (para 612).

Throughout the final section of the Report, clear recommendations were made that the churches should be phased out of Bantu Education altogether: such phrases as "a general development plan for the Bantu", and "a definite and clearly planned policy for the development of Bantu societies" (para 766c) set the scene for the recommendations that followed. In paragraph 802, it was stated that "to secure effective local government and all the manifold advantages which such a system offers, it will be unavoidable that local control of schools be handed over by the missions to the Bantu Local Authorities." That was clear enough. However, the same paragraph concluded with the following sentence:

It should be emphasised, however, that what the Commission urges is not the abolition of local control by missions, but rather the creation of a new and more effective system of local government which necessitates that local control of schools be taken over by Bantu Local Authorities if the system is to be a success (para 766c).

It is no wonder that those involved in mission education were at a loss as to how to interpret some of the recommendations of the Report.

The Commission's recommendations were closely linked to the establishment of Bantu Local Authorities, which were to be set up in terms of a Bill then before Parliament: paragraphs 818 and 819 indicated that "all existing schools" would be put under the control of such Local Authorities as soon as they were able to "raise [their] share of the necessary funds, to administer the schools in an efficient manner, and to secure the support of the inhabitants concerned ('cash, competence and consent')". The churches would be expected to negotiate with these Local Authorities to ensure the protection of their "religious interests" in the schools they had handed over (para 820).

One recommendation which was not implemented in the following years, was set out in paragraph 891: this conceded that mission schools might continue to function "on the recommendation of the Bantu Local and Regional Authorities and with the approval of the Union Department of Bantu Education", and to be managed by "the religious body concerned". It may be that this was one of the paragraphs which led some to believe that it would be possible for church schools to continue to operate under the proposed new system. Later on, though, a rider to this concession was revealed: "Where religious bodies, performing satisfactory school work, are not prepared to transfer their schools they will not be compelled to do so but they

will not be entitled to claim full State-aid"

(para 915).

Detailed recommendations on the way in which control of the schools was to be transferred to the State were set out in paragraphs 908 to 918: in these, a number of vague generalisations were used to justify the moves. In paragraph 908, the Commission asserted that its recommendations had been made "in the firm belief that by doing so we can raise the school to a mighty instrument, not for the one-sided development of a small minority of isolated individuals but for the general development of the Bantu community as such." Presumably the work of the mission schools was seen as having been for the "small minority of isolated individuals".³

The significance of the role played by the churches as diligent "guardians of the Bantu" was acknowledged in paragraph 910: nevertheless the Commission insisted that "this guardianship now hampers the balanced development of the Bantu community and for that reason the guardian should stand aside if he desires to fulfill his mission."

3. There can be no doubt, however, about the fact that an effective programme of mass education was urgently needed: it was estimated that at that time, approximately two-thirds of all school-age African children were receiving no schooling at all. Of those who did attend, the vast majority did not stay in school for four years, the minimum length of time generally accepted as essential for a person to acquire functional literacy.

With reference to the anxiety of "the Bantu themselves" for the replacement of "subsidized mission schools" by "a system of Government schools", the Commission came to the following conclusion:

Their demand is based on an erroneous conception of the parts played by central control and local management in Bantu education. Our plan for reform puts these functions in their right perspective: the State takes over central control from the Provinces and the community takes over local control from religious bodies" (para 911).

Such change in control structures was to be "an orderly development and not a sudden or radical change" (para 912).

Problems were envisaged in the case of farm schools situated in "European farming districts", since Bantu Authorities would not be established there: the Commission proposed that such schools should "continue to be managed by religious bodies with the assistance of school committees, as long as circumstances justify such a course" (para 917).

Finally, almost as a postscript in paragraphs 983-985, the Report recommended to religious bodies how they should respond to the new situation:

Your Commission's recommendation that the control of Bantu schools should gradually be transferred to Bantu Local Authorities does not imply a desire to see a reduction of the activities of religious bodies on behalf of the Bantu. On the contrary, it is the earnest desire of the Commission that this work should grow and expand, and that religious bodies should do all in

their power to support and promote work of the schools.

Your Commission does not feel that it is within its province to indicate the form which the co-operation with religious bodies should take, but it might not be out of place to offer a few suggestions by way of illustrating the opportunities that exist in this field.

The Missionary's interest can be displayed in a very practical way directly in the school and through outside effort ... he can take a share in the religious instruction given in the schools ... he can influence parents to show an interest in the school ... He can encourage in the community the application of health lessons, religious lessons and lessons in morality and other useful practical knowledge and skills ... Sunday school and other religious services afford valuable opportunities for co-operation and by establishing some such activities as are represented by the Students' Christian Movement both missionary and educator could realize a very noteworthy common objective (paras 983-985).

It would have been interesting to have heard the reactions of some of the ministers who were involved in mission school administration to all that!

Recommendations on the Introduction of Bantu Education

In their comments on mission education, the Commissioners, in fact, drew attention to a number of problems which were already abundantly clear to those involved in the provision of education: the impossibility of the missions meeting the ever-increasing demand for education, the lack of adequately trained teachers and the inability to offer effective super-

vision of teachers, the low standards (aggravated by irregular attendance and high drop-out rates) being attained in many of the small primary schools, and the inadequate facilities and equipment provided at many schools, as well as the growing demand by local communities for the secularisation of education in line with that provided for 'white' children. These were not problems which were unique to South Africa: similar issues were being, or would be faced by Christian churches throughout Africa, as well as in other areas where they had been pioneers in the provision of education to the local inhabitants.

X What was unique was the way in which the Commissioners tailored their criticisms, and their recommendations, to match the demands of apartheid. Throughout the Report, emphasis was laid on what was regarded as being in the interests of 'the Bantu', a group of people seen to be totally distinct in their needs and aspirations from the rest of the South African population. Thus it was claimed that mission education was "not an integral part of a plan of socio-economic development", it had "no organic unity", it was "conducted without the active participation of the Bantu as a people", and that it achieved "a minimum of educational effect on the Bantu community" (para 752). "The inadequate functioning of teachers in schemes of Bantu development" (para 753) was also criticised.

The aims of Bantu Education were set out clearly in paragraphs 754-765:

Your Commission proposes the following definition of the aims of Bantu education:-

(a) From the viewpoint of the whole society the aim of Bantu education is the development of a modern progressive culture, with social institutions which will be in harmony with one another and with the evolving conditions of life to be met in South Africa, and with the schools which must serve as effective agents in this process of development.

(b) From the viewpoint of the individual the aims of Bantu education are the development of character and intellect, and the equipping of the child for his future work and surroundings (para 765).⁴

The "guiding principles" set out by the Commissioners concentrated on the need to co-ordinate education with other "social institutions" in order that education might be "co-ordinated with a definite and carefully planned policy for the development of Bantu societies." Schools would be made "as Bantu in spirit as possible" and would "provide for the maximum development of the Bantu individual, mentally, morally and spiritually" (para 766).

In considering the question "Why Bantu Education?" (paras 772-778), the Commissioners justified their

4. Kallaway has argued, however, that Bantu Education "extended mass education to the majority of South Africans in keeping with mass education strategies elsewhere, and were as such aimed at **consolidating the state** in the post 1948 mould, **incorporating** an entire new sector of the population into the **legitimizing** apparatus of **state ideology**, and **ensuring a supply** of appropriately **educated black workers** to meet the demand of the rapidly expanding industrial economy of the post-war era" (Kallaway, 1987). (Emphasis in original)

recommendations on the following grounds:

Bantu education does have a separate existence, just as, for example, French education, Chinese education, or even European education in South Africa, because it exists and can function only in and for a particular social setting, namely Bantu society (para 777).

Having acknowledged that there were no significant physical or psychological differences between 'Bantu' and 'European' children and that therefore "no special provision has to be made in educational theory or basic aims" (para 773), the Commissioners nevertheless commented:

... educational practice must recognize that it has to deal with a Bantu child, i.e. a child trained and conditioned in Bantu culture, endowed with a knowledge of a Bantu language and imbued with values, interests and behaviour patterns learned at the knee of a Bantu mother...

The schools must also give due regard to the fact that out of school hours the young Bantu child develops and lives in a Bantu community, and when he reaches maturity he will be concerned with sharing and developing the life and culture of that community (paras 773, 774).

Among the "needs for which provision should be made" by Bantu Education were "religious knowledge and attitudes", the ability to communicate with 'Europeans' "as a help in economic matters", and the acquisition of such "social patterns and values" as "punctuality ... sense of duty, mannerliness, neatness, reliability, power to concentrate, etc." (para 776).

These statements on the rationale for the introduction of 'Bantu education' were followed by three chapters on the "Proposed Scheme for the Reorganisation of Bantu Education" (paras 779-1044). The recommendations were, in fact, so detailed and so far-reaching that the Commissioners felt it wise to explain the reasoning which lay behind them:

Your Commission is satisfied that it is only by resorting to radical measures that an effective reform of the Bantu school system can be achieved. Your Commission is aware that the recommendations which follow are of a far-reaching nature and perhaps exceed the limits usually prescribed for an education commission. It considers the circumstances to be exceptional, however, and therefore feels at liberty to propose extraordinary steps for the improvement of Bantu education (para 779).

The final summary chapter (paras 1045-1054), intended to "epitomise the general argument", included the following paragraph:

Your Commission is of the opinion that education must be broadly conceived as a vital social service concerned not only with the intellectual, moral and emotional development of the individual but also with the socio-economic development of the Bantu as a people. Education, as one of a number of social services, must be integrated organically with all other State efforts designed to raise the level of Bantu life, and this integration should be effected both at the local and the national levels (para 1051).

Conclusion

Bantu education was to become just one branch of the state apparatus being devised to ensure that, as far as possible, 'Bantu' and 'European' development would move along separate, parallel tracks in the future, enabling each 'group' to develop its own independent identity.

In this manner it was presumably hoped to avoid any competition or confrontation between different 'groups' in a situation where 'white' domination was regarded by the Government as non-negotiable. Where contact between the different 'groups' was unavoidable, each 'group' had to know the rules of the game concerning inter-personal contacts. Bantu education would instil in 'the Bantu' values which were acceptable to employers: it would ensure that far more children acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills, which would open up opportunities for employment as unskilled and semi-skilled, low-paid workers; it would restrict the number of those who would be allowed to proceed to higher education to a small group needed to fill posts created through the envisaged 'Bantu development plan'. It would also remove the supposedly 'liberal' influence of the churches from education, and ensure that no students were led to believe that they would ever be able to aspire to equality with 'Europeans'.

CHAPTER 5

ACCOMMODATION OR CONFRONTATION? RESPONSES TO THE EISELEN COMMISSION REPORT

In the consideration of the responses to the Report, no reference has been made to organizations or individuals which supported the implementation of a totally separate education system for African children, on the grounds that such responses contribute little of significance to this particular study. This account of the responses to the Report is thus undeniably one-sided: there were organizations and individuals who welcomed the recommendations of the Commission.

The deliberations and reactions of a number of organizations representing the 'liberals' referred to previously had a significant influence on the decisions reached by Methodist leaders, and so material from those organizations has been included in this section.

'Liberal' responses

In April 1952, a Conference of educationists was held at Fort Hare under the auspices of the Christian Council and the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), to consider the recommendations of the Eiselen Commission. It was attended by "over a score of educationists, African and European, resident in the Eastern Province" (South African Outlook, 1.5.1952:72). The May and June

editions of South African Outlook recorded "Some Observations" made at that Conference.

In July of the same year, another Conference was organised by the SAIRR in Johannesburg, which was attended by 274 delegates, representing 159 churches, missionary societies and other organizations. The MCSA was officially represented by the Revs J W Hunt, C K Storey and D C Veysie, and Mr R Cingo. Methodists present in other capacities were the Revs S P Freeland, E E Kumalo, E E Mahabane, P S Mbete, H G Mpitso, and S G Pitts, Dr W F Nkomo, Professor C P Dent, and Messrs K B Hartshorne, G W Tabor, W G A Mears and Mrs Mears, as well as a number of representatives from Boitshoko, Indaleni, Kilnerton and Healdtown Institutions. Members of the Eiselen Commission were invited to attend, but none of them did so.¹

Mr (later Dr) K B Hartshorne² prepared a 62 page summary of the Eiselen Commission Report (Hartshorne,

1. A hand-written note from Cook to the Minister is attached to the copy of the invitation in the State Archives files: in it Cook suggested that he should say that no-one was available. Subsequently a letter, dated 30.4.1952, was sent to the SAIRR stating that "unfortunately those officers with specialised knowledge of Native Education will not be available owing to prior engagements" (UOD E 53/71). It was apparently felt that no useful purpose would be served by sending any of the Commissioners to the Conference. One wonders if the recommendations were regarded as being non-negotiable.

2. Hartshorne was principal of the Kilnerton Training School, a member of the SAIRR Council and Executive Committee, and of the Transvaal Teachers' Association Executive. At the time when he submitted evidence to the Eiselen Commission, he was involved in a research project sponsored by the National Research Council, and working on a Doctorate on 'Native' Teacher Training.

1952), which was made available to the delegates before the Conference. Three papers were read at the Conference on various aspects of African education, after which delegates were divided into six study groups to consider the recommendations of the Report in detail: these groups dealt with aims and guiding principles; organization, administration and financing; primary and secondary education; higher education and teacher training; technical and industrial education; adult education and other aspects. The results of these deliberations were published (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1952), and made available to all interested parties, including the Minister of Education, Arts and Science, Mr J H Viljoen. The Minister was requested to appoint a special committee to study the document: he refused, but gave his assurances "that all representations made would receive earnest attention" (Survey of Race Relations, 1952-53:65).

The Report of this Conference was regarded by the Christian Council and the Conference of the Methodist Church as a definitive statement on the Eiselen Report, and both agreed to endorse it wholeheartedly. At the January 1953 meeting of the Christian Council, a proviso was added that "the position should be closely watched and if necessary further action taken specifically by this Council as representing many of the churches with

large educational institutions for Africans" (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58. Christian Council Meeting Minutes, 16-17.1.1953).

Since the Roman Catholic Church was the one denomination which later refused to comply with the Bantu Education legislation, consideration has been given to comments which were passed by Catholic writers at the time, although a detailed study of the Church records was not undertaken. There was hardly any comment on the Report in the publications of the other English-speaking churches, and there, too, no attempt has been made to look into their archives. As far as the Methodist Church is concerned, the official response, put forward in a Conference resolution, has been quoted where relevant, while the comments of individual Methodists have been considered separately at the end of the chapter.

Reference has been made, where appropriate, to some of the more conservative African organizations which did not reject the Report in its entirety.

Although all the above gatherings and organizations were representative of both 'black' and 'white' South Africans, their responses were apparently largely shaped by the dominant, generally conservative 'white' leadership at the time. The likelihood of obtaining consensus on any radical statements or proposals which might have

challenged, or even upset, the status quo was remote: many members of these groups had little in common politically, socially or economically. It was their allegiance to Christ and the Christian Church which brought them together.

The responses from all these groups did, however, make it clear that the recommendations of the Report were largely unacceptable to them. The Government was urged to consult further with the churches and others involved in African education before implementing the recommendations, but nowhere was there any suggestion that members should openly resist or actively campaign against the recommendations. In fact, there was uncertainty in some quarters as to whether the Report was really of any great significance, since many of the 'liberals' were still optimistic that the 1953 General Election would put the United Party back into power.

The other noteworthy point about these responses is that so little attention was paid to the deeper implications of the recommendations for the future role of Africans in South African society. Apartheid was unacceptable in principle to 'liberals', but in practice had little real impact on their lives. 'White' Christians had little reason to get over-excited about recommendations which scarcely affected them.

'Radical' responses

Most of the energy of the ANC at this time was being directed towards the Defiance Campaign, and little comment was made on the Eiselen Report. Mr Es'kia Mphahlele was critical of this lack of response at a national level to both the Report and the TATA campaign against it. "It took the ANC a long time to digest the message of our campaign in 1951 and 1952" (Manganyi, 1983:145).

Hyslop has suggested that the failure of the ANC to respond quickly left the way open for the Unity Movement, and especially the AAC, "to fill a space left by the ANC's neglect of [education issues], and to win a base among teachers." (Hyslop. The Orlando teachers' struggle... :21) The Report was discussed at the 1952

AAC Conference:

The main task of teachers was to co-operate with the parents in order to make the Eiselen Report and Recommendations unworkable. A resolution, totally rejecting the Report and its Recommendations, and demanding unreservedly equal education for all, was unanimously passed" (Torch, 6.1.1953).

Two of the most outspoken opponents of the Report in the Cape, the TLSA and CATA, had strong links with the Unity Movement and the AAC, and the responses of these organizations have been considered in some detail. TATA was also totally opposed to the recommendations of the Report.

Torch³ gave extensive coverage to the different Conferences held during 1952, at which the Report was criticised and rejected. It also published a series of articles on various topics covered by the Report. With reference to the debate in Parliament, it criticised those who were seen to have commended the Report in any way, and pointed out that no African organization had expressed approval of the Report. Towards the end of the newspaper's extensive coverage of the Orlando teachers' campaign, the editor, Mrs J Meissenheimer, wrote:

The Eiselen recommendations are absolutely indispensable for the working of the Bantu Authorities Act, and the NAD has given clear instructions that the opposition of the African teachers must be broken, organizationally and individually (Torch, 5.8.1952).

The strong arm of the Government was to be felt increasingly by teachers who came out in opposition to Bantu Education in the coming years.

Responses to Key Recommendations of the Commission

Although all the recommendations of the Report were interdependent, and geared towards the "'bantuisation' of education for Africans" (Educational Journal 23(7), 1952:1), four key areas which elicited most comment from the critics have been selected for consideration in this

3. The official organ of the NEUM.

section. These are the proposed 'development plan for the Bantu' and the aims and guiding principles of Bantu education which were devised to support that plan; the proposed establishment of a Department of Bantu Education which would supervise the Bantu Authorities as they took over control of Bantu education from the churches; the recommendations for the future financing of Bantu education; and the recommendations concerning the relative status of the official languages and the vernacular in Bantu education schools.

A 'Development Plan for the Bantu'

The Commissioners made it quite clear that, in their understanding, the aim of Bantu education was to fit African children for their place within traditional 'Bantu' society. "School education, if it is to be coordinated and in harmony with social development, must be seen as one of the many educational agencies and processes which will lead the Bantu to better and fuller living" (Eiselen Commission Report: para 764).

The suggestion that Africans could be regarded as an "independent race" and arbitrarily divorced from the mainstream of social, political and economic developments in South Africa was totally rejected by all the critics of the Report. So, too, were the emphasis on tribalism and the preservation of 'Bantu culture', and the suggestion that a distinction could be made between

Bantu Education and other education. The Fort Hare Conference commented: "In the Commission's view, African education cannot be isolated from the rest of African life; in our view it cannot be isolated from the rest of South African life" (South African Outlook, 2.6.1952:86). The SAIRR Conference rejected any suggestion that Africans were not "an integral part of South African society" (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1952: para 2). It expressed its view that "every child is the inheritor of world culture ... [and] should have access to this common cultural heritage" (para 6). In the same vein, South African Outlook commented: "... any Report which assumes as a hypothesis the theory that the Bantu are an independent economic or social entity instead of an interdependent one is vitiated from the outset in its premises" (South African Outlook, 2.6.1952:73).

The resolution of the Methodist Conference on the Report included a similar declaration:

The guiding principles and aims of Native Education must be the same as those for any other racial group. These are, to discover and develop the latent ability or natural capacity of people of all ages so that they may become good Christians and therefore useful members of the community and the nation. It should be the aim of all responsible for education - Church, State and People - that every child shall have the opportunity of receiving sound education up to the maximum of his capacity for receiving it (Conference. Minutes, 1952:105).

The 1952 CATA Conference also passed a lengthy resolution on the Report in which it rejected "the proposed control of education by tribal authorities [and] the registration of schools along tribal lines" (Teachers' Vision 19(3), 1952:16-17). Mr B M Kies, editor of the Educational Journal, condemned the "schemes to resort to a State-created and manipulated tribalism" which he regarded as measures "to stem the advance of the African people and to atomise the growing unification and national liberatory consciousness of the Non-European people" (Educational Journal 23(7), 1952:1).

In his address to the 1952 Conference of the TLISA, Mr W P van Schoor highlighted the connection between the Report and the Bantu Authorities Act: "The Report must be studied in juxtaposition to recent anti-African legislation such as the Bantu Authorities Act, the Native Laws Amendment Bill, etc, to understand its meaning and purpose" (Educational Journal 24(1), 1952:4). The Conference took up this idea in a "Resolution on the Eiselen Commission Report":

The Conference ... finds ... that the tribalism of the African people in and through the proposed educational system, which forms the central feature of the Report, is intended to fit in with the Bantustan planned for the African people in the Bantu Authorities Act, and it was therefore the purpose of the Commission to fit the education of the Africans into the out-moded 'Bantu society'. The supervision of schools and teachers by out-moded tribal authorities which are to be revived will engrave upon the African people vicious tribal, language and social patterns which are the very antithesis of the aims of

education in a modern democratic society
(Educational Journal 24(1), 1952:11).

Another scathing comment was passed by Miss J Gool at the first Joint CATA/TLSA Conference also held in June 1952: "The conclusions of the Eiselen Commission which leads [sic] African education to the backwaters of tribalism ... were only a logical development of a state whose thinking, outlook and upbringing had been warped by racial fear" (Educational Journal 24(1), 1952:20).

The issue of the re-establishment of tribal structures was apparently not a major concern of the 'liberal' organizations, although in his report on the SAIRR Conference to the Christian Recorder, the Rev S P Freeland⁴ noted that the concept of the preservation of 'Bantu culture' was totally rejected: "Native leaders have realised more clearly than many Europeans that the process of westernisation cannot be halted at some hypothetical half-way position to be arbitrarily decided by Government decree" (Christian Recorder, 11.7.1952:7).

The Commission's statements on the aims of Bantu education alerted some to the fact that such education would by its very nature be inferior to what was offered to 'white' children. The editor of Teacher's Vision, Mr R S Canca, wrote as follows:

4. It seems that he had attended the Conference in his individual capacity, and not as an official representative of the Methodist Church. At the time he was minister of the Turffontein Methodist Church, Johannesburg.

Separate education is tantamount to inferior schools, inferior equipment, inferior salaries, no citizenship for the African. In short it means education for servitude on the part of the African, while on the part of the European it means domination forever (Teachers' Vision 19(2), 1952:4).

The theme of the anticipated inferiority of Bantu education was taken up by the editor of the Educational Journal as well in an editorial headed "Blue Book for Slave Education":

... we have now to deal not merely with the denial of equal or equitable educational facilities. We have to deal with the conscious stunting and poisoning of 'bantuisation' of education for Africans, aimed at fitting them into a system of national ghettos to be known as 'bantustan' and calculated to help create and make workable this system of 'Bantu Tribal Authorities' or Quisling Councils under the Native Affairs Department (Educational Journal 23(7), 1952:1).

A special TATA Conference, held in March 1952, rejected the Eiselen Report totally, describing it as a "political document aiming at frustrating African progress; a propagation of white superiority in [sic] one hand and black inferiority on the other" (Bantu World, 26.4.1952). TATA's mid-year Conference also rejected the Report, noting specifically the emphasis on tribal groupings and its aim of "preparing the African child to become a willing and docile servant of the ruling class ... [which wants] to chain our minds in order that they should continue to exploit the African people" (Bantu World, 12.7.1952).

The possibility that the recommendations of the Report would result in inferior education was not specifically mentioned anywhere else in the records being considered: that African education was inferior to 'white' education may have simply been accepted by many as an unquestioned fact of life in South Africa.

The Role of the Department of Bantu Education

When both the 'liberal' and the 'radical' organizations came to consider the recommendations for the transfer of control of African education from the churches to the State, they found themselves in something of a quandry, for that was after all what both groups had been recommending for a considerable number of years. The churches favoured the move because they realized the inadequacy of the provision they were making for African education, and the impossibility of meeting the rapidly increasing demand for education. Africans regarded State education on a par with that provided for 'white' children as their inalienable right, and regarded the churches as a stumbling block in their way of achieving it. For both groups, State control was the only viable and acceptable way into the future. The problem lay, however, in the manner in which the Report recommended that this should be done, and in the deeper implications of those recommendations.

Hartshorne did not anticipate that the recommendations of the Report would lead to the immediate abolition of church control:

The Commission has suggested a plan whereby Government administration can be instituted immediately, but whereby all mission schools are not taken over at once. Frequent mention of mission schools within the framework of the new system has been made. This has been done not only because it is desirable but, from the nature of the case, essential, that the change over from mission to community schools should be an orderly development and not a sudden and radical change (Hartshorne, 1953:44).

The SAIRR Conference Report "regret[ted] the suggestion that missionary control should be gradually abolished" (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1952: para 4), while the proposal to place education under the control of a Division of Bantu Affairs was described as being "entirely unacceptable" (para 9). An extension of the powers and functions of the Union Advisory Board for Native Education was proposed instead (para 11).

For the Roman Catholic Church, any proposal to deny the Church the right to run its own church schools was regarded as a direct attack on the Church, and "a fundamental invasion of parents' rights" (Abraham, 1989:67, quoting a Southern Cross⁵ correspondent).

In a pamphlet entitled Catholic Bantu Education, Fr Colin Collins rejected the Commission's criticism that mission education had disturbed the tribal set-up, was poorly

5. Weekly newspaper published by the Roman Catholic Church in Southern Africa.

co-ordinated, and had failed to secure parental involvement:

... these faults of the mission controlled system are definitely exaggerated by the Eisilen [sic] Report. That the tribal system should have been disturbed was inevitable. Centering [sic] of education and the increase of parent responsibility could have been adequately catered for without abolishing mission control altogether. Hence the critics of the Report point to an underlying MOTIVE for the rejection of mission control.

.....
The move to take over the schools is part of the overall scheme to fit the Bantu into a preconceived scheme of Society (Collins. Catholic Bantu Education...:17, 19).

The Catholic Church had a fundamental philosophical commitment to the provision of Catholic education, which may explain its extreme sensitivity to the Report's recommendations. In the end it was the only major denomination which refused to allow the Government access to its schools. Flanagan has, however, suggested that the opposition was "on purely religious grounds, not because it [the Bantu Education Act] was the 'cornerstone of apartheid'" (Flanagan, 1982 in Prior:86). Certainly the Church was obliged to follow the Bantu education syllabuses in its schools, and in due course to employ teachers who had been trained to implement Bantu education.

The Methodist Conference had a fair amount to say on the question of church involvement in African education:

The Conference ... cannot accept the recommendation ... for the gradual abolition of missionary direction and participation in education. The Church regards this as essential to safeguard Christian faith and

life.

The Conference is convinced that while two-thirds of the children of school-going age are still unprovided for, the aim of the Government should be to meet this need and to continue to support Missionary enterprise ...

The Conference disagrees emphatically with the Commission's recommendation for the overall control of education by a sub-department of a Division of Bantu Affairs (Conference. Minutes, 1952:105).

Several people commented on the substantial body of expertise in handling African education which the churches had built up over the years, and contrasted that with the total lack of experience in educational matters, of the proposed local and central authorities.

Hartshorne noted that most churches agreed that responsibility for the provision of African education needed to be undertaken by the State, particularly at the primary school level. However, he believed that

... the country can ill afford to lose the educational experience of the missions and their close personal contact with the African. It is particularly important that these should be maintained in the training of Bantu teachers. It is to be hoped that the Government will continue to regard the Missions as partners in this venture, and not as obstacles to be removed as soon as possible (Hartshorne, 1952:8).

The teachers' organizations were notably silent on the question of the abolition of church control, although in a series of articles written for the Educational Journal, Mr (later Dr) E L Maurice⁶ commented on the

6. Vice-President of the TLISA in 1952-53.

recommendations to establish a Department of Bantu Education, instead of placing African education under the control of the Union Education Department. On the effective ending of mission control of schools he had this to say:

... it will naturally be considered by many as a tremendous step forward, but it must not be forgotten that for a vicious form of control will merely be substituted a form which will better serve the purposes the ruling class have in view. For if the Eiselen Commission was dissatisfied with the efficient way in which the missions served their ends, it may well be imagined what is intended by the new machinery of control (Educational Journal 23(8), 1952:6).

Financing Proposals

None of the organizations under consideration was happy with the recommendation that Africans should "bear a larger share in the financing of their education" (Eiselen Commission Report, 1951: para 1042). The Fort Hare Conference described the recommendations as being "most unfair We consider that universal education is one of the first and most basic responsibilities of the Government of this or any country" (South African Outlook, June 1952:87). The SAIRR Conference spelt out in considerable detail its rejection of the proposals, recommending "that Africans should not be expected to play a direct part in the finding of any portion of the funds used for Native Education" (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1952: para 25). The Methodist Conference acknowledged that the Commission's proposals

would involve the State in considerably increased expenditure, but declared that it was unable to "accept the principle of differentiation in taxation; future developments should be financed from General Revenue" (Conference. Minutes, 1952:105). Mr T M Moerane, president of the Natal African Teachers' Union, predicted that the recommendations would "halt the progress of African education by starving it financially" (Argus, 4.7.1953).

On the whole the 'radical' organizations did not even bother to go into a detailed consideration of the specific recommendations, having rejected the Report outright from the beginning.

Official Languages and the Vernacular

On this issue, too, there was a degree of ambivalence, since mother-tongue education, at least for the initial period of schooling, was a generally accepted educational principle.

The SAIRR Conference "recognised the importance of the mother-tongue" (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1952: para 29), but rejected the Commission's recommendations⁷. They were regarded as impractical in

7. The Commission had argued that education through the medium of the mother-tongue should be extended right through the secondary schools and into training schools as well. The practice had been to switch to one of the official languages as early as possible, usually after Std 2.

the current South African situation, in which African children would have "to live their adult lives in a Western environment", and because of the difficulties of "using a Bantu language to convey precise scientific concepts and Western modes of thought" (para 29). It was noted that "the official languages are and will remain the chief gateways of knowledge open to Africans" (para 29). The Conference recommended that all tuition should be given in one of the official languages after Std Four (para 30), and rejected the suggestion that the vernacular should continue to be used as a medium of instruction right through to Training School level (para 31).

On this topic, the African organizations had more to say, since the language recommendations were regarded as yet another means whereby the Government was planning to deny Africans a place in the mainstream of South African life.

The resolution which CATA passed at its Conference rejected

... the imposition of special 'Native' syllabuses and vernacular media of instruction which are designed to limit the scope of African education in order to produce intellectually under-developed beings with no hope of ever aspiring to and claiming opportunities and rights equal to those enjoyed by Europeans (Teachers' Vision 19(3), 1952:16-17).

Teachers' Vision editor, Mr R S Canca, expressed his belief that the use of the vernacular would "entrench tribalism which is detrimental to our struggle for liberation." He highlighted what he saw as the other important consequence of the recommendations, namely that the official languages would be taught so that an African would "know just enough to be a good servant, and not enough to be able to understand the various aspects and problems of our life in South Africa" (Teachers' Vision 19(2), 1952:7).

Mr L Sihlali, in his presidential address to the 1952 CATA Conference, also commented on the increased use of African languages proposed by the Commission: "The danger implicit in this is that we are being systematically excluded from world culture and ideas to which we can gain access only through English" (Educational Journal 24(1), 1952:10).

Responses of South African Methodists

A detailed study of the Methodist Church records for this period would seem to indicate that many of those who commented on the Report really failed to grasp the implications for the Church's future involvement in African education. However, at least one of those working in a Methodist Institution at the time (Rev J W Minty of Kamastone in the Queenstown district), recalls

that the document gave cause for great concern among those involved in African education, and he expressed the opinion that the political implications were, in fact, clear to them (Interview: 9.5.1990).

At the 1951 Board of African Education meeting, it was suggested that a sub-committee should be appointed to study the Report when it became available; however, since "the Association of Heads of Institutions (Union) had already made such a provision ... it was decided to ask for their findings after their committee had met" (BAE. Minutes, 4.9.1951). Those Minutes gave no indication that members of the Board were aware of the discussion on the Report which had already taken place earlier in the Senate and the House of Assembly. Nor is there any further indication as to whether the report referred to was ever seen by members of the Board.

By the end of 1951 there was evidence of some anxiety concerning the recommendations of the Report: the Rev S G Pitts, in his Annual Report on the work at Healdtown, commented: "We are told it [the Commission] is likely to recommend, or even demand, certain radical changes in the administration of Native Education" (Healdtown, 1951:17).

When the Board met in September 1952, members seemed uncertain of their own competence to respond to the Report, and eventually accepted a resolution which had

been passed by the Transvaal Synod. The Rev Dr J B Webb, Chairman of that District, assured the Board that the resolution had been drawn up by experienced educationists in the Transvaal. The Secretary of the Board, the Rev S G Pitts, expressed the opinion that "Conference could hardly issue a comprehensive statement on the Report", and so the Board recommended to Conference that the Transvaal resolution, with one or two amendments, "be adopted as the judgement of the Methodist Conference on the Native Education Commission's Report" (BAE. Minutes, 10.9.1952).

The Resolution⁸ passed by the Conference later that year was couched in the customary rather bland language of such statements. There was little indication of any real concern that most of the recommendations of the Report would be implemented within a comparatively short space of time. The Resolution endorsed the findings of the SAIRR Conference on the Report. Appreciation was expressed for the comprehensive work done by the Commission, particular mention being made of the recommendations for the expansion of African education. Other points dealt with in the Resolution have been considered already: one further point of interest, however, is the fact that those who formulated and accepted the resolution apparently had no problem with the use of the phrase 'Native Education'.

8. See Appendix D.

African educationists present at the 1952 Conference included Prof D D T Jabavu⁹, Mr R Cingo¹⁰, Mr H B Nyati¹¹ and Mr D G Mtimkulu¹², but there is no record of their contributions to the debate on this resolution.

During this period, there was no official Methodist Church newspaper, and records of other reactions to the Report are scarce. A report in Race Relations News (September 1952) indicated that the Report was discussed at the Natal Synod of 1952. The Rev J Wesley Hunt, President-Elect of the Conference, and Governor of the Indaleni Institution in Natal, asserted that there could be no talk of separation of races in education, and that education must be made available to all¹³. "Once education is divorced from the church, the field of education can be turned into a field of indoctrination ... To attempt to fit the African people into a preconceived scheme of life would bring about tremendous repercussions" (Race Relations News, September 1952:105).

9. Professor of African Languages at Fort Hare University. See Appendix B.

10. Principal of the United Bantu School, Kroonstad, and Member of the Board of African Education, and its successor, the Board of Education from 1947-1983. See Appendix B.

11. Supervisor of Schools in the Transvaal.

12. President of the Natal Native Teachers' Association Congress. See Appendix B.

13. He apparently ignored the fact that education provided for white and black children in the schools run by the Church was clearly segregated, and that the facilities provided at African schools bore no comparison to those at the 'white' schools.

The Christian Recorder was the mouthpiece of the Protestant churches at that time, and carried reports on some of the Methodist Synods and the annual Conference. The new President, the Rev J Wesley Hunt, laid great emphasis on mission in his addresses to the 1952 Conference: this included references to education as a significant factor in the mission work of the church.

Through education it has been possible to Christianise the thought-life of whole groups of people ... The Church ... dare not surrender entirely its influence through education and abandon that field to the caprice and fashion of the hour. ... That there will have to be some adjustment there can be no question (Christian Recorder, 2(17), 1952:5).

He suggested that the answer might be to hand over all primary education to the state, whilst retaining control of the High Schools and Teacher Training Institutions "so that the maximum influence may be exercised through highly trained and devoted lives" (Christian Recorder, 2(17), 1952:5).

It is significant, however, that in the official report to the Christian Recorder on that Conference, Rev J W Massey made no mention of the Resolution on the Eiselen Commission Report at all. On the question of African education, he simply recorded statistics from the African education reports, and commented that "Methodism's contribution to education in South Africa is indeed a great one" (Christian Recorder, 2(19), 1952:3). Even after the acceptance of the Resolution on the Eiselen

Commission Report, the significance of that Report was apparently not really understood by some of the delegates to Conference.

In the Healdtown Annual Report for 1952, the Rev S G Pitts noted that there were mixed feelings about the Report:

While there are things in it that commend themselves there is much also that is open to criticism. But at the close of another year, with a General Election due every [sic] shortly, it is impossible to foresee with any certainty to what extent, if at all, the report and its recommendations are to be implemented. One thing is certain however, and that is that the Churches do not and cannot endorse the view of the Commission that their task in education is finished, and that their only course now is to 'stand aside'. The hope for racial peace and harmony in this much divided country still lies with the Christian gospel and ethic ... And in that faith we must go forward, whatever sacrifices government policy may impose, for without it our country and its people are lost (Healdtown, 1952:10).

In a pamphlet, undated but apparently written in 1951/2, the Rev S M Mokitimi, principal of the Osborn Missionary Institution in the Transkei, outlined his plans for the future (CL: MS 15,440). No mention at all was made of the Eiselen Report, or of probable changes in the coming years. A comprehensive programme of agricultural education was to be introduced in 1953, and an ambitious building programme to be financed by loans, the interest on which would be paid from the Departmental rent grants. His dream was that the Institution would become the centre of community life in the district, incorporating

sports facilities, a library, drama and music societies, home improvement clubs, etc. It would seem that he, too, had failed completely to discern the implications of the Eiselen Commission Report for Institutions such as Osborn.

Methodist ministers Z R Mahabane and S S Seane were President and Secretary respectively of the Orange Free State branch of IDAMASA. Seane urged "all clergy to acquaint themselves with the contents of the report ... education was one - there was no such thing as Coloured, Indian or Bantu Education" (Bantu World, 10.5.1952). There is no indication, however, that they raised the issue in church publications.

No trace has been found of responses of other African Methodists to the Report, but it seems reasonable to assume that people such as Nhlapo and Honono, quoted in the previous section, would have responded to the recommendations of the published report in much the same way as they did to the appointment of the Commission.

Conclusion

The year following the publication of the Report was a year of considerable activity on the part of a number of different organizations with an interest or a stake in the future of African education.

In none of the responses from the 'liberal' organizations was there any suggestion that they should do more than react to the Report, commend it or reject it where appropriate, and urge the Government to reconsider certain aspects, or to consult with the churches and others before drawing up new legislation. The response of Mr H S van der Walt (Secretary of Education, Arts and Science) to the Director of the SAIRR in 1953, epitomised the attitude of the Government to the various protests which had been forwarded to it: "I think you may rest assured that the Department with its capable officers is quite competent to deal effectively with the matter against the background of the host of information and advice it now commands" (UOD E53/71).

In his Healdtown Report for 1954, the Rev S G Pitts noted that protests had been submitted to the Government, and then commented:

The Government ... was resolved to transfer Native Education from the Provinces to the Native Affairs Department ... The churches and many other bodies protested that if the control of Native Education was to be taken away from the Provinces it should pass to the Union Education Department ... This protest was without avail, however, and Native Education was transferred to the Department of Native Affairs as one aspect of the life of the African people which the Government wished to co-ordinate with others under a single Government Department (Healdtown, 1954:3-4).

The 'liberal' outlook of many of those involved in education was an important factor influencing the

responses noted in this section. The political nature of Christian National and Bantu Education had not yet been fully grasped: it was apparently not anticipated that the segregation policies of the Nationalist Government, which were condemned and rejected as they impinged on other areas of life, would be introduced into the field of education. Education was still regarded as being ideologically neutral, something to be offered to all who would benefit from it.

Few seem to have responded to the fact that the Eiselen Commission had produced a document which was rooted in the philosophies of Christian National Education and apartheid, and which would provide the rationale for the introduction of Bantu Education. Their responses tended to concentrate on the specific recommendations, rather than on a consideration of what Collins described as "the underlying MOTIVE" of the Report. Their failure to come to grips with that issue, and to give due consideration to the arguments of those who were vehemently opposed to the Report, left the churches ill-equipped to defy the provisions of the Bantu Education Act which was passed by Parliament in 1953.

The anger at what was perceived by the 'radicals' to be something essentially evil in the Report's recommendations, was markedly absent from the Church reactions. The Methodist Church leadership at that time was apparently unable or unwilling to identify with, or

respond to, the deep feelings of African members about the discrimination which they experienced in all aspects of their lives. For several years, the Methodist Conference had noted and deplored the worsening race relations in the country, and commended its African members for their patience. There was never any suggestion, though, that this was a 'white' problem as well: comments and recollections of 'white' Methodists on the social situation in the early Fifties, make it clear that for the majority, the status quo was perfectly acceptable, and few ever thought of questioning 'the South African way of life' to which they had become so accustomed and which operated to their advantage.

There was never any suggestion, either, that the Methodist Church had the potential to make any significant impact on the situation. The perceived futility of protesting to the Government is evident in the somewhat wry comment from the 1953 Conference, in the traditional 'Address to the British Conference':

The Methodist Church of South Africa has its own interest in the welfare and progress of the African people. We have through the press, or the public platform, through representation to the government sought to influence responsible authorities towards a more liberal policy. We cannot claim to have had any worthwhile success (Conference Minutes, 1953:183).

The teachers' associations, on the other hand, urged their members to take action to prevent the implementation of Bantu education. Hyslop suggested that the

three Orlando teachers, Mr Zeph Mothopeng, Mr Es'kia Mphahlele and Mr Isaac Matlhare were "the first group of leaders of an African organization in the country to realise the sweeping implications of the Eiselen Report and to mount a campaign against the commission's recommendations" (Hyslop. The Orlando teachers' struggle...:13). Mothopeng called for the establishment of Parent Teachers' Association to fight the implementation of the Commission's recommendations, which were devised to ensure the continuation of 'white' oppression and "to enslave the minds of the African youth" (Torch, 5.8.1952).

The CATA resolution referred to earlier "call[ed] upon all Non-European teachers to organise the people and explain to them the recommendations of the report and the disastrous consequences of their application" (Teachers' Vision 19(3), 1952:16-17).

The most that can be said about the effectiveness of these protests, however, was that Verwoerd had taken note of them, for in his 1954 speech to the Senate he commented:

The teachers, by means of resolutions taken by their associations, have expressed themselves strongly against the findings and recommendations of the Education Commission and also against the Bantu Education Act ... The reforms which are contemplated will probably be hampered considerably by teachers who do not like the new role which will be entrusted to them, a role in which they will be in the service of and responsible to the Bantu community (Senate. Debates, 1954: col 2613).

Manganyi, in his biography of Es'kia Mphahlele¹⁴, suggested that the leaders of the teachers' associations perceived the inherent dangers in the proposed implementation of Bantu education, but found it difficult to get their message across either to parents (many of whom were uneducated and politically unsophisticated rural people), or to many of the teachers employed in mission and Government schools at the time:

We warned the people against the dangers of the proposed system of education not only for the child but for Africans as a people with a historical destiny. This education for slavery had to be resisted because its philosophical underpinnings were wrong ... It was clear to us at that time that most teachers did not understand the full implications of what we were saying. Most of them were not ready for the stand we were asking them to take against the proposed introduction of Bantu Education. In general, African parents in those days were not the kind that would spend sleepless nights over matters of this kind in spite of the fact that it was a period of political ferment against 'unjust laws' (Manganyi, 1983:98-99).

By the time the Bantu Education Bill was first tabled in Parliament in September 1953, very little had really been achieved either by those who had simply protested, or by those who had urged their followers to actively resist the recommendations of the Eiselen Commission. As Pitts noted, "the Government was resolved", and nothing was going to stand in the way of its determination to implement a programme of education which fitted into the 'grand apartheid' design. How the

14. Written in autobiographical form, but clearly not quoting Mphahlele directly.

churches, and the Methodist Church in particular, dealt with the next stage in the implementation of apartheid in education is the subject of the next chapters.

CHAPTER 6

THE BANTU EDUCATION ACT: 'LIBERAL' AND 'RADICAL' RESPONSES

By the middle of 1953, every organization that had an interest in African education had probably made some kind of response to the Eiselen Commission Report. The majority of churches, and all the major African organizations had rejected the recommendations, some with greater vehemence than others. On the whole, the African organizations were far more sensitive to the fact that apartheid principles permeated the whole Report, than were the majority of churches and 'liberal' organizations. Those who had been most affected by the apartheid laws of the early Fifties were strongly opposed to any recommendations which might result in further repressive and discriminatory legislation being written into the Statute Book.

Outline of Proposals

The Eiselen Commission recommendations were fundamental to Verwoerd's 'development plan for the Bantu', and once the Bantu Authorities Act - a necessary adjunct to the recommendations - was placed on the Statute Book in 1951, he was ready to tackle the education issue. Dr H F Verwoerd introduced the First Reading of the Bantu Education Bill in the House of Assembly on the 11th August 1953, and the Second Reading on the 17th September. He

assured Parliament that the Government had considered all the memoranda which had been submitted to it after the publication of the Eiselen Report, and that "after consideration we decided that we subscribed to the recommendations of the Eiselen Report" (Hansard, 1953: col 2670). He then introduced the Bill, which, sketchy as it was in many respects, provided a framework for the new plan for 'Bantu Education'.

Much of what Verwoerd said in Parliament has been quoted by many critics in many contexts: he made it clear that he regarded the education currently being given in African schools as of the "wrong type", since it created unrealistic expectations; that education was but one of a number of "services which must be rendered to the Native, which are in their interests and which perhaps they do not realize to be in their interest" (Hansard, 1953: col 3576); that education in the past had been "planless" and unrelated to community and tribal life, thus making the recipient "feel that he was not a member of the Bantu community but a member of a wider community" (col 3577).

In his introductory remarks, Verwoerd set out the plans for the implementation of Bantu Education very clearly. He provided reasons why central control should replace provincial control, emphasising the fact that the State, and not the Provinces, financed African education. He then invoked "one great and sound basic principle in all

education ... that the man who gets the benefit should also have co-responsibility" (Hansard, 1953: col 3581), and announced that parents would be expected to share responsibility not only for the control, but also for the financing of education. On the question of transfer of control to the NAD, Verwoerd went to great lengths to elucidate why it was essential "that there should be co-ordination of all the various services rendered by the State for the benefit of the Bantu" (col 3583). The whole speech reflected the patronising attitude of the Minister towards the African people, and made it clear that he believed - no doubt in all sincerity - that he knew far better than any African person what would be to his or her benefit in the long run in South African society. "Education should not clash with Government policy" which did not "favour ... equal rights" but wanted "the Bantu" to find "their opportunity for development" in serving "their own people in the higher spheres as well as in the more humble positions" (cols 3585-86).

The Bill dealt largely with administrative measures and identified three types of schools which would function under the new scheme - Bantu Community Schools, Government Bantu Schools and State-aided Native Schools.¹

1. State-aided schools were clearly not to be encouraged. With reference to such schools, the Act stated that "the Minister may consider whether the establishment or existence of any such native school precludes, retards, or renders impracticable, the establishment of a Bantu community school or a Government Bantu school for the area concerned" (Act No 47 of 1953: section 8(1)).

It also indicated that the present system of African education would be altered so as to accommodate far more children in the lower classes of the school. This would be achieved by the shortening of school sessions from four to three-and-a-half hours, and the introduction of morning and afternoon shifts. All children who started school would be expected to attend for at least four years, and during that time, promotion from one Standard to the next would be automatic. After Standard Two, a selection process would be introduced, and only those children deemed capable of benefitting from further education would be allowed to stay in school. An even more limited number would be given the opportunity to proceed beyond Standard Six. Little indication was given as to how the proposed changes would be implemented: instead the Minister was empowered to issue 'regulations' as the need arose.

The Education League² reacted strongly to the "inordinate powers" given to the Minister "to make regulations for almost every aspect of Bantu Education". The League asserted that these regulations would

... give him unrestricted powers to decide such vital matters as teachers' conditions of service, the content of education, the registration and establishment of schools, the monies to be allocated to particular schools and the language medium in the schools and teacher training colleges. We do not consider this tremendous concentration of power in the hands of the Minister to be

2. Founded in 1949 to oppose Christian National Education and separate development in education.

in the interests of education. (Education League, 1953: 1)

Parliament approved the bare bones of the Act, but effectively gave the Minister power to shape the future of Bantu Education as he wished.

By the time the Bill was passed, the future of the church schools was still unclear: Mr M C de Wet Nel denied accusations that the missions were being forced out of African education, but added, somewhat ominously, that "the mission schools will be the faithful allies of the educational experts, especially if they will put into effect the right sort of policy for South Africa, and do not act in any prejudicial way." (Hansard, 1953: col 4046) In response to a query as to whether the provisions of Section 7 (on private schools and subsidies) would lead to mission schools being "wiped out", the Minister replied, "could, but not 'would'". (col 4281). Then in his final reply to the Third Reading debate, Verwoerd denied that he had ever given anyone an assurance "that the mission schools would be allowed to remain without restrictions" (cols 4431-32).

It is small wonder that there was a great deal of confusion among the churches at that time as to how the new Act was going to affect them, and in large measure a failure to appreciate just how quickly their control over African education was to be brought to an end.

Comments of Native Affairs Department Officials

In the ensuing months, various appointments were made to the Division of Bantu Education. Dr P A W Cook was appointed as Professional Adviser for Bantu Education, and Mr F J de Villiers as Under-Secretary for Bantu Education. De Villiers was a former Chief Inspector of the Cape and well-known to the officials managing schools or running Institutions in the Cape. It has been suggested that he was, in fact, delegated to 'sell' the Act to the churches, since he already had their respect and confidence. (Hartshorne. Interview, October 1989)

As early as 13 October 1953, the Rev D P Dugmore³ informed Dr Webb that he had tried without success to see Eiselen about the Bantu Education Act. However, his interview with a Mr Zietsman, who had drafted the Bill, yielded the information that the latter believed that State-aided (i.e. Mission) Schools "will change by a natural process of evolution, as the people wish to throw off mission control, into either Community or State schools." ⁴ On the question of the future of Kilnerton, "he said he thought it would be 'hundreds of

3. Governor of Roitshoko Institution, and later of Kilnerton Institution. See Appendix B.

4. Dugmore to Webb, 13.10.1953. (TD Schools: General Correspondence.)

years' before it became a state institution. He was most emphatic that the Bill envisaged a gradual and a natural evolution." Such a reply would seem to indicate that - unless there was a deliberate attempt being made to confuse the issue - Government spokespersons were at that time almost as much in the dark as the churches about the way in which the new Act was to be implemented.

A similar lack of clarity in Government thinking was apparent in a conversation between Mr F J de Villiers and the Rev S G Pitts. Reporting on a meeting between them in East London, Pitts wrote to the President of the Conference, the Rev H W Rist, that he had tried to get information about the future of the Institutions, since the Act did not specify that they would have to be taken over by the Government. "De Villiers' last word to me was that even yet they might decide to let Institutions carry on as they are, but taking over those several who wish to be taken over, and letting the others come in their own time!"⁵

A different picture seemed to emerge, however, at a special meeting of the Christian Council held on 9 and 10 March 1954, and chaired by the Rev D P Dugmore, at which de Villiers was present. There it was noted that the Department favoured Community Schools, and that church and mission schools "may only continue at the

5. Pitts to Rist, 1.4.1954 (CL MS 16/598/8: Box 58).

pleasure of the Minister under any conditions he prescribes"; that "if a Church wished one of its Institutions to be completely independent then its resources may be restricted, it might experience difficulty in getting staff, and in any case it would come under Para 8 of the Act which provides for its closure, after an inquiry, if thought necessary"; and that the school feeding programme would probably be discontinued completely in December 1954, as it was a "luxury service for the small minority fortunate enough to come to school." The report concluded by noting that "Mr de Villiers assured the members that his department would at all times be willing to give careful consideration to constructive proposals which would help in the more effectual carrying out of their duties."⁶ What the nature of such proposals would have to be in order for them to be considered "constructive" by the Department, was not spelled out, but later developments suggest that they would have to have been fully compatible with the developing Departmental policy.

The Cape Times, under the heading "Mission schools to be offered choice", reported a NAD official as saying that

... mission schools of all denominations were being given the choice by the Government of selling or renting their school buildings to the Department of Native Affairs or keeping full control themselves on the basis of a 50 per cent decrease in the subsidy for teachers ... There was no

6. Christian Council File 1 (CL MS 16/598/8: Box 58).

question of forcing the missions to do anything they did not want to do. The choice was open to all missions throughout the country (Cape Times, 8.4.1954).

The farcical nature of this statement would have been clear to anyone who had tried to balance church school books year by year, and to find the money to maintain and equip existing premises, let alone provide the new buildings which were desperately needed.

For about nine months after the promulgation of the Bantu Education Act, Government officials were apparently very unsure as to just what changes were going to be brought about by the new legislation. The church leaders and those responsible for the mission schools, were equally confused.

Verwoerd's Senate Speech, June 1954

In June 1954, Verwoerd addressed the Senate at length on "the policy pursued by the Minister of Native Affairs" (Senate. Debates, 1954: cols 2595-2622). In this speech, he spelt out his understanding of the churches' role in the new dispensation. At a number of different points in his speech, he told the churches how they ought to respond to his proposals, and seemed to have taken it for granted that they would comply with his wishes. On the question of the changeover from primary mission schools to community schools, he stated that

since it was a straight forward procedure, "the churches can make no serious objection to this" (col 2602).

Referring to the situation in Teacher Training Institutions, he stated:

It is obvious that the State must get full control over the training of teachers. For many decades the churches have used the training of teachers for the furtherance of their own particular interests. They have outgrown the stage where they were dependent on this assistance and are now strong enough to organize their expansion work in other ways (col 2603).

The need for efficiency - so heavily stressed in the Eiselen Report - was also emphasised:

The State is taking over from the churches to carry on the same work more efficiently. Assets which were created by the churches for the Bantu will be retained for the Bantu. Under the circumstances, it ought not to be difficult to come to a fair agreement with the churches when they are taken over (col 2603).

He was not averse, though, to making use of the churches when it suited him. The churches would continue to receive their full subsidy "where the department may feel it necessary to request a church body to undertake the control of a mission institution or school temporarily" (col 2604), and provided, of course, that the church had agreed in principle to hand all its schools over to the government. Although the churches would be "given the choice to provisionally retain control" over their boarding hostels (col 2064), that control could be terminated by the NAD if any conflict arose between the it and the churches over matters of policy.

Verwoerd also addressed the question of the new role of the teacher in African education. Men teaching in the junior primary classes would be replaced by women, which would result in "a considerable saving in funds which can be devoted to ... more children at school" (col 2615). New salary scales would be drawn up to ensure that teachers' salaries were realistic when compared with those of African parents. Special attention would be given to teacher training, so that all future teachers would be trained in a manner appropriate to the implementation of Bantu Education. Should teachers object to these moves, Verwoerd spelt out the consequences of such behaviour quite clearly:

Because so much depends on the teacher carrying out his duties conscientiously, I wish to express here the hope that the teachers will not fail in this, because for teachers who are not faithful in this regard, there is no place in the service of the Bantu Education department (col 2614).

Verwoerd's description of Bantu Education on that occasion has almost become classic, so often has it been quoted: "The Bantu must be guided to serve his community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open" (cols 2618-2619).

Verwoerd's address to the Senate dispelled any remaining optimism that the churches would be allowed to work side

by side with the State in African education: he made it quite clear that he was not prepared to allow the churches to continue to spread 'liberal' ideas through their schools, or to use them any longer as a means of evangelizing the African people. African teachers, too, were left in no doubt as to their future role: if they did not agree to co-operate with the Government, they would simply be dismissed from their posts.

Reaction from the South African Churches

At the beginning of August 1954, the churches received the Departmental Circulars which for the first time, set out clearly the choices open to them in respect of Primary, Post-Primary, and Industrial Schools on the one hand, and Teacher Training Schools on the other. In the interests of "a wider scheme of social development" (Departmental Circular quoted in Survey of Race Relations, 1953-54:97), the churches were given the following choices about the future of the mission schools other than Teacher Training Institutions: to retain control of schools and hostels as private unaided institutions; to retain control with a reduced Government subsidy for teachers' salaries and cost-of-living allowances (75% was quoted at that stage); to hand over control of the schools to Bantu community organisations (then being established under the provisions of the Bantu Authorities Act).

In future no teacher training was to be carried out by the churches. They were therefore given the following choices in respect of Teacher Training Institutions: to rent or sell both Training Schools and hostels to the Department; to retain the hostels only on a subsidized basis; to convert the teacher training facility into a primary or secondary school, subject to the conditions laid down for such schools. The churches were encouraged to retain control over their hostels, and to continue to minister to their members in the Institutions. Various other details were also spelt out in respect of the payment of subsidies, teachers' conditions of service, and the establishment of Advisory Committees for the Institutions.

At a meeting of the Association of Heads of Institutions⁷, held in September 1954, the policy to be adopted by the churches was discussed in detail. The Rev R H Shepherd⁸ reported that the wide variety of views held by the different churches had been highlighted at a recent Christian Council meeting. At this meeting, one of the issues under discussion had been "whether one could co-operate at all with the Department in the implementation of the Act in view of the principles underlying it" (CL: PR 3557/1. Christian Council Minutes, 7.9.1954).

7. Methodist representatives at that meeting were the Revs D Bandey (Clarkebury), P S Mbete (Bensonvale), R I Thompson (Buntingville), S M Mokitimi (Osborn) and S G Pitts (Healdtown).

8. Principal of Lovedale Institution.

Unfortunately no record was kept of the details of this discussion. No consensus was reached, and all that came from the meeting was a statement prepared for the churches, which reaffirmed certain fundamental principles: that Christians should provide education for all, the only restricting factor being that of ability; that the churches must "safeguard Christian influence in the schools"; and that uniform standards and evaluation procedures should be formulated for all children. It was pointed out at this meeting that should churches opt to retain control of their schools, they would then have to accept, as employers, full responsibility for the payment of teachers' salaries, cost-of-living allowances, and pensions. A circular sent out by the Catholic Bishop's Conference concerning the possible establishment of independent private schools, indicated some of the problems which all the churches were facing. There was deep concern that the implementation of Bantu Education would

... involve the violation of certain basic principles of education ... Parents of African children are also confronted with a difficult decision, namely whether to submit to the type of education hinted at by the Minister, or to withdraw their children from state and state-aided schools sending them to independent schools whatever the sacrifice (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58. Christian Council File 1).

There was little doubt in most people's minds by the end of 1954, that drastic changes in the field of education lay ahead of the churches. Up until then, changes which had been implemented over the years had taken

place gradually as the situation in the country had changed. Now, for the first time, the State had taken up a position which was in direct opposition to the mission schools.

The Roman Catholic Churches believed that a State plan of development for African education, ran counter to their understanding of their fundamental role in African education. There was no real question as to how they would respond, since they believed that the Church had an obligation to provide both secular and religious education for all Catholic children (Abraham, 1989:76, 81).

For other denominations, it was a question of deciding which was the lesser of two evils: rejecting the whole Bantu Education package, and closing down their schools, thus putting thousands of children out of school and teachers out of work; or allowing the State to take over the schools in the belief that some education was better than nothing at all.

Numerous writers and speakers during this period made it clear that the choice was an impossible one, and acknowledged that whichever decision they made, there were valid arguments in favour of the opposite one. In the end, very few decided to defy the government. The Roman Catholics, and the Southern Transvaal Diocese of the Anglican Church refused to hand over their schools to

the State, and were faced with the unenviable task of persuading the people most closely affected - the teachers - that matters of principle should take precedence over bread-and-butter issues such as drastically reduced salaries and decreased job security. The other denominations decided not to close their schools, and therefore had no choice but to rent or sell their buildings to the State, since they realized the impossibility of finding the money which would be needed to run the schools as private institutions.

African Responses to the Act

The language of the responses from African teachers and others told of the anger of people who saw in the Act a direct attack on them and, more particularly, on their children. There was no doubt in the minds of the majority of 'blacks' who responded to the Act that it was designed to engender a 'slave mentality', to condition African children to view themselves as 'inferior beings', and to ensure a supply of 'cheap labour' for those who needed to keep the wheels of industry and the mines turning smoothly. Frequent references were made to the 'Herrenvolk policy' of the ruling party: G M Pitje, in an address to the Multiracial Conference in December 1957, suggested revising the NAD's slogan of "Education of the Bantu, by the Bantu, for the Bantu" to "Education of the Bantu by

the Herrenvolk and for the Herrenvolk" (Karis-Carter Collection. Microfilms: 19A:YE 3:82/1).

Optimism and a belief that things would work out all right in the end - so evident in the Methodist Church responses - were found in only one press report. The Executive of the Cape African Teachers' Union (CATU)* described the apartheid principles which were fundamental to the Act as "flaws". Delegates to its Conference were assured that teachers belonging to CATU would "maintain the standards hitherto obtained" (Advance, 22.7.1954).

At a meeting in New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, Mr F J de Villiers commended his listeners for the way in which people had co-operated with the Government in the implementation of the Act, but this would seem to have been little more than a Departmental propaganda exercise: "In setting up Bantu school boards and committees under the new scheme, the Government had had almost the full co-operation of the Bantu people. They were willing to serve on these bodies" (Cape Argus, 17.3.1955.) Yet Webb had had cause to reprimand African ministers for their refusal to have anything to do with the elections (Methodist Newsletter, 1.4.1975:3); Cameron (1986) has recorded strong resistance in the Western Cape to School Board and Committee elections;

9. The teachers' organization established in the Cape in 1953 by those who did not accept CATA's affiliation with the AAC.

and there is evidence of similar opposition throughout the country.

The distinction between denominations appears to have been relatively unimportant to African teachers and leaders: it is the response of "the churches" which is condemned, and so no attempt has been made in this section to isolate responses to statements and actions of the Methodist Church in particular.

TATA protested in no uncertain terms, first against the Bantu Education Bill, and later against the Act. According to a report in Bantu World, the TATA president, Mr S P Kwakwa, told a special meeting of the Association that "he believed the Bill would have a very bad effect on the future education of African children", and he "appealed to African teachers to educate the parents on the implications of the new Act. The parents should also be given time to think over the matter and give their decision in due course" (Bantu World, 17.10.1953).

Even before that meeting, TATA had sent a protest to Verwoerd, which commenced with the following statement:

It is a matter of profound regret that the Honourable Minister of Native Affairs has resolved to proceed with his Bantu Education Bill in the face of bitter opposition and against the wishes of the African people in this country. The high-handed manner which the Minister has adopted in dealing with the transfer of control of our education to the Native Affairs Department is nothing short of riding roughshod over the human feelings of a people who should look to the same Minister

for protection when their very existence is threatened (Good Shepherd, September 1953:3).

Then followed ten reasons why TATA was opposed to transfer of African education to the NAD. Bantu Education was described as having been designed to ensure "perpetual baasskap", to prepare children "for a certain type of society, determined for us, not with us, by our rulers and completely unacceptable to us", and to "deny us more freedom of opportunity and human rights." There is also an interesting comment with reference to the move to emphasise tribal loyalties: "We wonder whether tribal traditions now much bolstered up can always be reconciled with Christian teachings." As far as is known, this issue was never taken up by any of the churches.

CATA also reacted to the Bill and in the September 1953 edition of Teachers' Vision, local Branches were encouraged "to take this Bill to the people and not only explain its full implication, but also organise resistance to this measure. Parent-Teacher Associations must be formed at once!" (Teachers' Vision 21(1), 1953:25). The next edition also stressed the importance of telling parents about the implications of Bantu Education.

On December 14, 1953, a nation-wide Conference of teachers was called by the CATA Executive to consider ways in which teachers could oppose the implementation of the Act. The circular advertising the Conference

attracted the attention of Eiselen¹⁰, who immediately condemned it as "an appeal to oppose the law of the land" (Cape Argus, 9.12.1953), and instructed teachers not to attend the Conference. Mr N Honono, who was one of the organisers, retaliated by urging teachers "to demonstrate their readiness to fight for true education." He predicted that "this attempt by the highest official of the Native Affairs Department to muzzle African teachers is a foretaste of things to come" (Cape Argus, 14.12.1953).

Between 150 and 200 teachers ignored Eiselen's instructions and attended that Conference. A lengthy resolution passed at the end of the Conference condemned apartheid in education, the Eiselen Commission recommendations, and the Act "passed against the wishes of the non-European oppressed people by a Parliament in which they are in no way represented." All "non-White people" were urged to engage in "a principled, unified, unceasing struggle against the educational system devised under the Bantu Education Act as an integral part of the whole system of oppression by the Herrenvolk"; to beware of Government use of "quislings working the Bantu Authorities Acts", and of teachers "to school African children for perpetual slavery"; "to urge upon all the oppressed people their national duty to pursue and co-ordinate the struggle, not only against the insidious provisions of the Act, but also against those who betray their people

10. At that time Secretary of Native Affairs.

by accepting the positions and offices especially created for quislings under the Act"; and to encourage teachers to "work in closest co-operation with the people struggling not only against the Bantu Education Act, the Bantu Authorities Acts and the whole system of oppression, but also for full citizenship rights" (Teachers' Vision 21(3), 1954:9).

The resolution set the tone for ongoing protests from CATA, which led to the dismissal of numerous teachers in 1955 and 1956. CATA was the one group which regularly castigated the churches for their responses to the provisions of the Bantu Education Act. It had attempted unsuccessfully to arrange a meeting with school managers in the Transkei "in order to devise ways of bringing the Bantu Education Act to the notice of the people", and commented scathingly on

...these gentlemen [who] are in the position of trustees of the people's school buildings ... [but] have not felt the need to inform the owners of the impending changes in their children's schooling. On whose side of the barricades do the ministers stand in this battle? (Teachers' Vision 21(3), 1954:11).

In the same edition of Teachers' Vision, the editor, Mr L Sihlali, commented that "the least expected source of recognition of CATA as a potential danger to Herrenvolkism was the pulpit" Teachers' Vision 21(3), 1954: 3). The churches had been opposed to the CATA-initiated Queenstown Conference, and had criticised those who had attended. Perhaps this explains, in some

measure, the apparent failure of the Methodist Church to heed the views of people such as Honono, who seem to have been ignored by the 'white' Church hierarchy.

Another attack on the churches was published in the April-June edition of Teachers' Vision, by someone writing under the nom de plume 'Radius'. S/he commented on both good and bad features of the churches' involvement in African education, and then went on to say:

Lately, perhaps through panic at the threatened loss of their share of the rotten spoils of a rotten status quo, they have allowed themselves to go to excesses in the way of seeking to ingratiate themselves with the Government at our expense. Both Catholics and Protestants have been at pains to show that they do not support the claims of the Africans. They have come out boldly to oppose the liberatory movement (especially on the education front) ... We wish to let these people know that all their acts are known and chalked up, and no excuses at all will prevail. We shall hold each mission body responsible for the actions of its agents (Teachers' Vision 21(4), 1954:10).

Two further anonymous comments were published in the October-December issue of Teachers' Vision:

By surrendering the schools WITHOUT CONSULTING the people, the Churches have indicated their willingness to co-operate with the oppressor ... The men of God need to be watched (Teachers' Vision 22(1 & 2), 1954:4).

We have seen with disgust the despicable actions of the herrenvolkist missionaries. We have raised our voice in protest against and condemnation of the double-dealing and treachery of the churches generally ... The churches while ostensibly rejecting Bantu Education have agreed to operate the Bantu

Education Act!" (Teachers' Vision, 22(1 & 2), 1954:17).

A final comment was made by the editor, Mr L Sihlali, in the January-March 1955 issue: "Nor are we taken in by the protestations of the churches that speak with double tongues, condemning the Bantu Education Act but grabbing the thirty pieces of silver offered by Eiselen for the lives of our children" (Teachers' Vision, 22(3), 1955:2).

While acknowledging that much of the language used in CATA writings of that period is provocative and somewhat extravagant, it seems necessary, nevertheless, to raise two questions about the comments and accusations quoted here. Did the churches fail completely to listen to, and hear, the anger and the pain that gave rise to such statements? What 'African voice', if any, was heard in their 1954 Conferences, when the decisions concerning the future of mission schools were taken?

It needs to be noted, too, that African opinion was itself divided on the question of how to respond to the Act. Archchbishop Geoffrey Clayton made this clear in his charge to the Cape Town Diocesan Synod in November 1954:

The question has been asked whether the African natives [sic] have been consulted about this policy. The answer is, Yes. Africans are not unanimous, but generally speaking it appears to be the case that while some Africans, especially the more vocal and politically-minded, would welcome

a refusal to lease any schools to the Government, that is not the view of most of those who are themselves more intimately concerned with the matter. In one diocese ... it appears that there was unanimous agreement that it would be wrong to refuse to lease any schools (Good Hope, Christmas 1954:5).

Mr J M Nhlapo, who was at that stage editor of Bantu World, felt that those churches which had decided to rent their schools, then had to deal with matters of conscience which raised further real problems:

If they sell the schools to the Native Affairs Department, they will console themselves by saying they will not be party to what will be done to the pupils in them. If they receive rent for their buildings, they will be co-operating with the government in carrying out an educational policy to which they have raised an objection. If, in the case of boarding schools, they will agree to maintain the hostels, they will be tacitly saying they do not want "Bantu Education", but they are prepared to keep those who must receive it physically fit enough to endure it ... The churches are ... faced with a most crucial position [sic]. They have our full sympathy in their dilemma, and our profound gratitude for doing over so many years what they will now be compelled to abandon (Bantu World, 18.9.1954).

The majority of other bodies representing African opinion also reacted to the provisions, implications and anticipated consequences of the implementation of Bantu Education, and as has been noted, were almost unanimous in their condemnation of all its aspects. To go into the details of the various protests would serve little purpose here: suffice it to say that among the other organisations quoted in the various media of the day were the ANC, the TLSA, and OFSATA, CAPA, IDAMASA, the

Location Advisory Boards' Congress, the Fort Hare University College student body and Students' Representative Council, the Anti Bantu Education Student Action Committee, the Federation of African Teachers' Associations, and numerous individuals.

Conclusion

Neither the churches nor the teachers' organizations were able to reach consensus on the most appropriate and effective ways of responding to the provisions of the Bantu Education Act. In general, however, it seems that the church leadership concentrated on the practical aspects of the options offered to them. The financial constraints seemed overwhelming: the prospect of finding the money necessary to pay teachers' salaries, in addition to that required for administration and maintenance, was a daunting one. The majority of churches felt they had no choice but to be 'realistic'. They bowed to the demands of the Government because they saw no other way open to them. Concern was expressed about the ideological aspects of Bantu Education, but that does not seem to have been an overriding problem for most of those in leadership positions.

For the majority of teachers, on the other hand, ideological issues were of overriding importance. Those in leadership positions in the more radical organizations,

at least, were unanimous in their calls for total opposition to the implementation of a system of education which they saw as having been devised to ensure the permanent subordination of 'blacks' to 'whites' in South Africa.

One notable feature of this period is the apparent lack of consultation between the church leadership and the teachers' association leadership. It seems from the records that no serious attempt was made by either group to hear what the other was saying, despite the fact that many teachers were active members of the various churches. Once again, it is clear that the decision-making at this time was essentially in 'white' hands, with very little cognisance being taken of 'black' views and feelings.

CHAPTER 7

THE BANTU EDUCATION ACT: METHODIST RESPONSES

The 1953 Methodist Conference met two weeks after the Act was approved, and the resolution which it passed relating to the Act noted that Native Education was to be transferred to "a Government Department": there was no comment on, or protest against, the fact that that Department was to be the Native Affairs Department (NAD), not the Union Education Department (UED). The rest of the resolution dealt with the drafting of new regulations on the management of African schools, teacher disciplinary procedures, and new curricula. The Conference "resolved to approach the Government with the request that prior consultation takes place with the Churches and Missionary Societies ... before any Ordinance is published in connection with Native Education under the new authority" (Conference. Minutes, 1953:97). Clearly the fact that the churches had no place in Verwoerd's scheme of things had not become clear to the members of Conference at that stage.

The report on Conference published in the Methodist Newsletter noted the important role that the Board of African Education would have to play in the light of "recent legislation", but gave no indication of the debate at Conference on the new Act. Of more significance to the reporter, was the Conference decision to publish a pamphlet "setting forth our Church's record,

position and aim in African education, in order to counter the causes of periodic disturbances in some of our Institutions." (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1953:

5) The Conference report published in the Christian Recorder made no mention of African education at all under the subheading 'Education.'

In the light of what has already been noted about the Act, it is hardly surprising that the Methodist Church records for 1954 show the Church leadership struggling to put together a viable response to what was probably the biggest challenge it had ever faced from the State. The provisions of the Act were sketchy, information from Government officials contradictory, and it was only as the various Regulations were published during the course of 1954 that the full implications of the new Act became clearer.

An Extraordinary Meeting of the Board of African Education

At the end of March 1954, the President of Conference, instructed the Rev S G Pitts to convene a special meeting of the Board of African Education, "in view of the extremely serious situation which has arisen out of the implementation of this Bill, especially as it affects the policy and property of our Church," and urged all to attend the meeting "whatever the inconvenience, because of the grave decisions and

recommendations this meeting will have to make." ¹

At this meeting there were eighteen white ministers, six black ministers, four white and four black laymen present. The Rev J W Hunt presented a summary of the Act, noting that he "had entered into much consultation regarding it, and he viewed its implications as alarming". He set out the three options which the churches had been given: to sell the school buildings, to conduct the schools as private schools on a reduced subsidy, or to lease the buildings to the State on what were undoubtedly unfavourable terms. He noted that

... the Act was the beginning of a wedge to be driven between the Missionary and the African, in order that liberal elements may be eliminated.

There was a possibility that the Government would be willing to retain and use the missionary. The danger of this lay in the fact that the Government could then claim that it had their support. On the other hand, if the missionary had nothing to do with it, then he would be criticised for his withdrawal (BAE: Minutes, 30.4.1954).

The Minutes do not make it clear whether he anticipated that this criticism would stem from the Government or from the African people.

The notes on the general discussion that followed Hunt's statement provide some indication of the thinking of the Board members at that time. "Grave fears" were expressed "by the African people" that educational standards would drop. There was also concern that

1. Rist to Pitts, 30.3.1954 (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58).

"the African people would tend to feel forsaken" if the Church surrendered its schools to the State, particularly as the Methodist Church "had a large stake in education." The schools were obviously regarded as an important element in the Church's missionary work: "The Church had an immensely important message to impart and every means of getting that message across should be used." On the other hand, the Board accepted that since "the Act was now law", it was necessary to look at new ways of responding to the new circumstances with which the Church was faced. Fears were expressed that the Act might be interpreted in such a way as to "endanger much of the Church's work concerned with the moral welfare of the African people". At a practical level, it was also noted that "some definite decision should be taken with regard to further expenditure on buildings" (BAE: Minutes, 30.4.1954).

It is noteworthy that when a sub-committee of the Board was appointed to draft recommendations to Conference, neither Mr Honono nor Mr Mtimkulu - out-spoken CATA and NATU office-bearers at the time - was included. The Rev S M Mokitimi and Dr W F Nkomo were the two African representatives on the ten-person committee. Mr Mokitimi had been described earlier by the executive of UCATA as "a representative of mission institution policy" (Teachers' Vision 12(2), January 1947), and his subsequent contributions to the South African Weekly tended to confirm this comment. Dr Nkomo had been

praised by the Rev E D Storey for "his contributions to the tone and spirit of the [1953] Conference " and described as "a man who will act a reconciling force in our South African life" (Christian Recorder, 3(19), 1953:7). His credentials in the African community were later sullied by his expulsion from the ANC, after he had opposed the ANC boycott policy and joined a delegation to plead with the Government that dismissed pupils should be readmitted to schools.

The sub-committee of the Board met for about three hours, and when the full Board reconvened that afternoon, it heard that, in the "considered opinion" of the sub-committee

...it is not possible for the Church to retain control of any category of school in view of:-

- (a) the inadequate subsidy offered with regard to salaries and equipment;
- (b) staffing difficulties that will be encountered;
- (c) the insecurity of tenure under Section 8 of the Act² (BAE: Minutes, 30.4.1954).

The remainder of the statement set out in some detail proposals for dealing with the transfer of schools, and included a call on the Christian Council to convene a conference "to consider a common approach to the Government in respect of the implementation of the Bantu Education Act". A press statement - "intended ... to reassure the African people regarding the attitude of the

2. Section 8 provided for the closure of any private school at the discretion of the Government.

Church to the Bantu Education Act" - was drawn up, and subsequently sent to all the District Synods for comment and response.³ It presumably had a significant influence on the reactions which came from there.

A Cape Argus report on the meeting reflected the frustration of many who were struggling to formulate a response to the new legislation. "The work and development of Bantu education - which the churches had maintained for so long under considerable hardship and difficulty - appeared not to have been recognised" (Cape Argus, 1.5.1954).

District and Synod Reactions

Letters were sent by Dr J B Webb to all Superintendents of African Circuits in the Transvaal District, setting out the three options which were open to the Church in respect of its schools.⁴ Webb noted that after the April meeting of the Board of African Education superintendents would be notified of the decisions taken by the Board.

Three responses are preserved in the correspondence files: two came from African superintendents, the Revs

3. No indication has been found as to whether this statement was ever published in the press or not, nor has a copy of the statement been seen.

4. Webb to Superintendents, 20.4.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

A E N Bolani of the the Witbank African Circuit, and L P Motshabi of the Good Hope Mission, recommending the sale of the schools under their control. Bolani argued that the Rent grant for the Primary School building would not cover the cost of necessary repairs, and that staff appointed by the TED would have no commitment to maintaining the property in good repair. Motshabi, referring to schools which were located in a 'Native Reserve', gave an interesting insight into the methods used by the Government to ensure compliance with the new legislation:

The Government is busy educating the Native Chiefs and tribesmen how to comply with the Bantu Authorities and Bantu Education Acts. The Native Commissioner is personally visiting the tribes, as a government official, the tribesmen form a big majority in the Reserves, they are already clamouring to have these schools under their administration. It will be difficult to manage these schools when all the affairs of the Reserves are going to be carried in accordance these Acts[sic].⁵

Similar replies from Webb to both men noted that the Board of African Education had recommended that no mission schools should be sold, and that no final decisions would be taken until after the Synods and the Conference had met. Bolani was requested "not [to] commit the Church in any way in regard to our Witbank School"⁶, which reprimand led to a hasty reply from Bolani, assuring the Chairman of his adherence to Church policy: "Far be it from me to involve the Witbank

5. Bolani to Webb, 3.5.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

6. Webb to Bolani, 15.5.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

Methodist School in any intricacies associated with the Bantu Education Act. This is to allay any fears in certain quarters that may have been aroused by my answers to your recent circular letter."⁷

While these two letters may not have been representative of the general response from African superintendents, Webb's reply seems to suggest that input from rank-and-file ministers was not regarded as particularly relevant to the debate in the higher courts of the Church. Moreover, Bolani's second letter indicated that he was clearly unwilling to do anything that might result in his being dubbed a 'troublemaker'.

The third letter came from the Rev Alfred Salmon, Superintendent of the Pietersburg Circuit, and referred to the TED requirements concerning the election of African School Committees. Salmon felt very strongly about what he saw as the unreasonable nature of the demands being made, and advised the Chairman that he refused to complete the required forms. "When TED takes over it can arrange its own committees and pay for its servants to make these trips out to the schools. I did not enter the Methodist ministry to be an unpaid civil servant." He noted that since most parents at the schools in question were illiterate, it was unrealistic to suggest that they could "assist" the Superintendent in any way. He did not consider it was practical to appoint anyone to

7. Bolani to Webb, 21.5.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

deputise for him at the required committee meetings, for "to let any of my natives run school committees would be asking for trouble."⁸

Webb was clearly anxious to remain on the right side of the Government during that interim period, and so Salmon was instructed to comply with the TED requirements.

Webb believed that any refusal to implement the instructions would play into the hands of the Government by

... bolster[ing] up its case for taking over mission schools. Its reply would be to take measures to expropriate the property in which our schools operate which could be disastrous to our remaining work - since so many of our schools function in church buildings, and classrooms, as such, are often in close proximity to our church buildings. This would prejudice the future of our church as a whole, and I cannot be party to such prejudicial action at this stage.⁹

The uncertainty engendered by the Act, and the fact that no-one really knew what new Regulations were going to be promulgated next, forced the leaders to tread very warily in the months before the publication of the authorised church statements.

At about the same time, the Rev Albert Cowgill, Superintendent of the Witwatersrand Methodist Mission, wrote to Webb, stating his opposition to the idea of selling buildings (since many schools and churches operated in the same building), and his belief that it would be

8. Salmon to Webb, 17.5.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).
9. Webb to Salmon, 24.5.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

impossible to run the schools on a reduced subsidy:

In general I am in favour of state schools for all sections, but under the present Government, it will be a setback to African schools ... We should have to give more attention to this [religious teaching], perhaps some ministers could help. It means we must do more in the way of Sunday School work.¹⁰

Already some of those involved in African schools had apparently accepted that the takeover was a fait accompli, and that the Church would not oppose the Government in the implementation of the new legislation. The suggestion that the Church would have to expand its Sunday School (and Youth) work among its African members was to be put forward later by other ministers as well.

In June, the Rev Frank Edmonds, the Secretary of the Conference, sent out instructions to all Chairmen, Superintendents, and Principals.¹¹ In line with the recommendations of the Board of African Education, no minister was "to accept office in any Government Institution as Secretary of a Controlling or Advisory Board", there was to be no new capital expenditure on any school buildings or hostels, and where necessary buildings were to be put into a satisfactory state of repair as soon as possible.

The various Synods met in the middle of the year. The Christian Recorder and the Methodist Newsletter

10. Cowgill to Webb, 10.4.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

11. Edmonds to Ministers, 1.6.1954 (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58).

reported on discussion of the Bantu Education Act in only three Districts, namely Natal, Queenstown and Southern Transvaal. In Natal, the acting Chairman of the District, the Rev Stanley B Sudbury, posed the question to the Synod as to whether the Act "was designed to serve the legitimate aspirations and development of the people or to serve a passing ideology," and expressed concern "that this 'new education' is likely to cut off the African people from the Western cultural heritage which has been one of the main motivations of our civilized life" (Christian Recorder, 4(8), 1954:3). The Cape Argus reported that at this Synod "speaker after speaker emphasized the worry and uncertainty felt in the Church over the Act and its implications." A resolution was passed recording the Synod's "deep concern at the terms of the Bantu Education Act as it affects our church and people ... It urges that wherever possible Methodist influence be retained in the new situation ... [and] urges the Board of African Education to continue to move in closest consultation with other churches." (Cape Argus, 10.8.1954)

A report to the Christian Recorder on the address of the Chairman, the Rev S le Grove Smith, to the Queenstown Synod, gave an indication of the mixed emotions that were evoked by the Act:

The Chairman led the Synod step by step through the details of the Bantu Education Act, pointing to the depths of despair brought about by the passing of the act, but [then] lifted Synod to the heights with his

message of hope and inspiration, pointing out that it would work out for the furtherance of the Gospel (JFM in Christian Recorder, 4(9), 1954:7).

The Methodist Newsletter also reported on the Chairman's address:

The Act ... was an admission of the State's responsibility for the education of its African people, but it was at the same time discrimination in its bitterest form, for no other racial group had been subjected to this severe handicap. However, we must fully realise that as the bonds of Paul had worked out unto the furtherance of the Gospel, so these bonds would do likewise. (Methodist Newsletter 1.9.1954: 3)

The Synod resolved to recommend to Conference "that there be no wholesale surrender of our schools, but that regional committees be appointed to consider the merits of each individual school" (Methodist Newsletter 1.9.1954:3-4). This all took place in the African session of the Synod: the reporter noted that one of the African laymen present had asked the Chairman to convey greetings from the African section to the European section, "requesting the Europeans for pray for them." It seems that the Act was not discussed at all in the 'European' session.¹²

The editor of the Christian Recorder, having commended Smith's positive approach to the matter in his editorial, continued:

Of course, the situation is not as desperate

12. At that time, most Synods met in racially segregated Lay Representative Sessions. This practice was gradually discontinued during the Sixties.

as some would picture it. As soon as adjustments have been made - and no doubt they have to be made - all those concerned will be able to fall into line with the new trend of education as applied to the Bantu people ... the authorities are not afraid to offer a reasonable education to the African people ... we should be careful in what avenues we resist the government in its project. In some respects we may be throwing a boomerang (Christian Recorder 4(9), 1954:2).

While an editor undoubtedly has the right to comment on news items that he published, this would seem to be a very clear instance where a 'white' viewpoint was being expounded, with little thought or consideration being given to the opinions or feelings of those most directly affected by the Act.

Dr J B Webb's statements as President are considered later, but as Chairman of the Transvaal and Swaziland Synod he commented on the problems that the Church had experienced over the manner of distribution of state education funds in the Transvaal. He expressed the belief that the Act would overcome those problems, and "that it contained some good features" (Christian Recorder 4(6), 1954:4). Of the way in which the whole question of the takeover of mission schools was being handled, though, he had nothing good to say:

We shall be left as unwilling landlords of tenants who have the right of expropriation of the landlord's property if, in their opinion, he does not behave himself. We were not consulted at any stage in the development of this legislation. We have simply been told, in effect, that the churches have done such a good job of work in establishing and maintaining schools and institutions for African children, that their services are no

longer required by the State ... we are deeply concerned about the underlying motives in this legislation, and the fact particularly that Bantu education henceforth is one of the arms of the Native Affairs Department (Christian Recorder 4(6), 1954:4).

Another view of the Transvaal Synod is contained in a report on the Representative Session prepared by Mr Selokani¹³:

Rev Dugmore reported that it was accepted that the administration of the Primary and Secondary Schools be relinquished. He had got information that the subsidy would be 75% on the Teachers' salary. He proposed that Synod should give the schools over to the Government ...[but] suggested that we retain the Hostels as long as possible. Synod accepted and agreed that the church should run the hostels of the Institutions under Government control (TD: Synod Files, 1954).

In the ensuing debate, Dr Nkomo recommended that the Church should keep control of some of its schools, but another delegate, Mr Lukele, felt that "it would serve no good purpose to keep any of them." That sense of helplessness and frustration which was experienced by so many of those involved in the debates at that time, was apparent in Dugmore's reported reply: "The Minister of Native Affairs was prepared to see things done the way he wants them done. If any Missionary preached against the Government Policy, the Minister of Native Affairs would close such a school or church." The report concluded by quoting Webb as saying "that we do not know much yet, and that we should wait and see" (TD: Synod Files, 1954).

13. Nothing is known of the writer other than that he was a delegate to the 1954 Transvaal Synod.

Further comment on the Synod discussions is contained in a reply by Webb to the first of three letters from Mr A D B Mntyati of Piet Retief, in which he addressed impassioned, though somewhat incoherent, pleas to the Chairman not to sanction the handing over of the Church schools to the Government.¹⁴ After noting that final decisions would only be made by the Board of African Education and the Conference, Webb wrote:

I have to point out, however, that when an appeal was made at Synod by Mr Dugmore for sacrifices on the part of the teachers should we agree to ask the Department to retain certain Mission Schools, there was no response. In a way I am not surprised at this because the whole situation is so confused at the moment.¹⁵

African parents and teachers were those who would have been asked to sacrifice most if the Church had stood firm against the State, and Webb's comment seems to indicate that those teachers who were present at the Transvaal Synod did not feel that they could take that risk. A similar situation prevailed at the Conference held later that year.

14. Mntyati to Webb, 18.8.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence). One of these letters was headed "Re: Wesleyan Methodist Mission Schools versus Dr Malan and his Cabinet."

15. Webb to Mntyati, 24.8.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

Responses in the Press

Throughout the year, comment on the implications of the Act, by various 'white' ministers of the Methodist Church, was recorded in the Methodist Newsletter.

Apparently the Church was being confronted by challenges which caught it unprepared, but its spokesmen tried their best to reassure members that they would not let them down. Rev W Horace Stanton¹⁶, during the course of a visit to Britain, told the British Conference: "Bewilderment and disappointment there may be when such legislation is thrust upon us - legislation aimed at restricting the educational opportunities of a section of our people - but silent and cowardly acceptance there can never be" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.8.1954:3).

In his President's letter, the Rev H W Rist suggested that the surrender of some schools to the Government might be "no bad thing ... if only to set men free from the tangles, burdens and snares of administration for the more perfect fulfillment of their divine calling as pastors and preachers." He proposed that the Church should retain control of two or three Institutions which could become "the African counterparts of our European Connexional Schools to continue to provide for African youth the distinctive training in Christian character that Kingswood, Kearsney, Epworth and St Stithians offer

16. At that time, stationed in Windhoek, South West Africa.

to the white adolescent" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.3.1954:1). In a later letter, he noted that the regulations published so far would allow the Church to retain some influence in African schools through the election of its ministers and members to school committees, and through access being allowed to ministers to give religious instruction (in the vernacular) during school hours. His attitude was essentially optimistic:

One thing our African people can be sure of ... is that the Methodist Church will continue to use her influence ... The Methodist Church does not intend to give up all interest in the services she has with credit and unwearyingly rendered in the past, in spite of limited resources, to the education of Africa's emerging millions (Methodist Newsletter, 1.5.1954:1).

At a meeting of the Christian Council, Rist noted that there was a fear among some that an attempt would be made "to indoctrinate the Bantu students and teachers once the transition period was over", since the Prime Minister had indicated that "a certain type of Afrikaner feels he has a divine right to educate the youth of this country along the lines designed to preserve White supremacy and Western civilization" (Cape Times, 20.5.1954).

In the same month, the editor of the Methodist Newsletter commented:

After more than a century of sacrificial and constructive work ... we have come to a parting of the ways. The end of a great era has been reached ... Unceasing efforts will be made to salve what can be rescued from the

general upheaval (Methodist Newsletter, 1.5.1954:3).

The Report of the Boitshoko Institution for 1954 struck a more positive note:

Whatever may happen under the Bantu Education Act, the Methodist Church will continue to do all in its power to maintain its influence on the moral and religious life of the students (TD: Synod Files, 1954).

The only published African response found is a letter in the Christian Recorder from A B Mkutyukelwa¹⁷, in which s/he urged the Methodist Church to look for ways to raise the money which would be needed to retain control over its schools, and to co-operate with other denominations in considering possible courses of action. "This is the hour to prove our worth as a church. If we hand over our properties who knows what will come next from Parliament?" (Christian Recorder 3(50), 1954:4).

The Rev Dr David Bandey, Principal of Clarkebury Institution and member of the Board of African Education, contributed a lengthy article to the Christian Recorder, in which he set out the position of the State, the attitude of the Church, and the limitations of the proposed plan for Bantu Education. With reference to the State, he acknowledged that

... the Government wants to take Bantu Education out of the hands of the Churches because the main mission churches do not toe the apartheid line. No secret and devilish

17. Nothing is known about the correspondent, other than that letters from him/her also appeared in the South African Weekly in the early Fifties.

motives need to be attributed to the Government: its members genuinely believe that peaceful development is unlikely while the present arrangement exists (Christian Recorder 4(10), 1954:1).

He also noted the substantial financial contribution of the State to African education. The Methodist Church approved any scheme which would provide education for more children, and accepted that the syllabi did need revision. There was, however, concern over the likely 'downgrading' of the Christian faith in secular schools, over the future of its European principals "all of whom have special experience and attributes", and over the problems which it believed would face Chaplains in hostels. He concluded the article in a similar vein to others who had written or spoken earlier: "The prospect is not entirely dark. There are problems and opportunities. The future, as always, depends on our response to God's challenge" (Christian Recorder 4(10), 1954:1).

He was challenged by Mkutyukelwa, who rejected the claim that "the prospect is not entirely dark ":

Here it may be safely asserted that not many people would accept this statement and believe that all is well... To be honest the attitude of the Church will be such as will render its hold on its adherents weak and ineffective (Christian Recorder 4(7), 1954:2).

This appears to be the only attempt by any readers of the Christian Recorder to enter into a debate on the Church's attitude to the Bantu Education Act, and the

only challenge to the 'white' leadership on the direction it was taking. There was no response to his comments.

Webb and Dugmore represented the Methodist Church at a special Christian Council meeting in September. Dugmore is on record as having expressed approval for the state takeover of primary schools, since Africans would thus be given greater responsibility for the education of their children. As far as other schools were concerned he thought "that we should co-operate with the State as something can be gained for the African people and for the Kingdom of God" (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58. Christian Council File). At the same meeting, Webb noted that the Church had not yet reached a decision on the matter. "They are on the horns of a dilemma as to how far it is possible to co-operate in a scheme one believes to be fundamentally wrong ... We have not yet sounded African opinion."

From the above, it is possible to gauge something of the measure of confusion which existed in the minds of Methodists about the future role of the Church in African education: some were sounding a somewhat aggrieved note, others were ambivalent as to whether it was a 'good thing' or not, while yet others welcomed the provisions and urged acceptance of the new dispensation. With one exception, African reaction went totally unrecorded in the religious press reports of the time.

Conference, 1954

When the Board of African Education met again in September 1954, it amended its earlier recommendations to Conference slightly, in the light of the comments from Synods and the circular letters which had by then been received from the Division of Bantu Education. Dr Nkomo was not present, but Mr Cingo attended the meeting.

The Recommendations to Conference, as finally approved by the Board, commenced with a Statement of Principles, two of which stated that "It is the duty of a Christian people to provide a Christian education for all men", and "It is ... the Christian duty of the Churches to safeguard the Christian influence in the schools."

This was followed by a request that

... Conference, before considering any of the detailed recommendations of the Board [should] come to a decision regarding whether or not the Church can co-operate with the Government in the implementation of the Bantu Education Act (BAE: Minutes, 8.9.1954).

The Conference also had to consider twelve resolutions from the Synods, "some of them very comprehensive" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.10.1954:6).

Prior to the debate on Bantu Education, the President, Dr J B Webb, gave his charge to the Conference:

. The status of the African in this country having been determined by the general

principles underlying the State's present policy of apartheid, education of the African child must henceforth condition him to be content with that status and not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think. Being under no delusions as to what that status is, we must make up our minds now whether we can co-operate with the Government in perpetuating that status ... We shall have to determine ... what is in the best interests of the African child and community, since we have so deep a commitment in this regard ... Will we serve the interests of the African better by saying 'We do not approve of your fundamental approach to this matter, and of your underlying principles, and therefore we shall not co-operate in any way at all,' or 'While we do not approve, and are very unhappy at this proposed education for inferiority, we must stand by our African people, and continue to bring whatever influences we can to bear upon the new set-up' (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1954:13).

In his address to the Representative Session of Conference, Webb was reported as having said that "the Methodist Church ... would be failing in its duty if it did not state its conviction that any policy which aims at different education on the grounds of race or colour is to be condemned as incompatible with Christian standards" (Daily Dispatch, 19.10.1954). He also expressed the opinion that Bantu Education was going to be inferior to that provided for 'European' children. When the time for decision-making arrived, however, the Conference was willing "to state its convictions" on the question of Bantu Education, but unwilling to decide not to "co-operate with the Government" in the implementation of the Bantu Education Act.

Regrettably, none of the available secular press reports on the Conference gave any indication of the debate on this matter: one assumes that nothing caught the imagination of reporters. The decisions of the Anglican Church - particularly those of Bishop Ambrose Reeves and the Southern Transvaal Diocese, to close down the schools - were widely reported at this time: similar calls in the other church conferences would surely have attracted some attention. The reporter for the Methodist Newsletter noted:

The Conference turns to the crucial debate on the Bantu Education Act with a feeling that this will probably be the most fateful discussion the Conference has entered into for many years ... Full opportunity is given to all to express their mind. What appears is the most uncompromising disapproval of the whole conception of the Act, combined with the desire to safeguard ... the Christian nature of African education, and to continue to foster to the fullest extent which [sic] conditions allow the interests of the people committed to our care (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1954:8).

According to the Christian Recorder (29.10.1954), that debate lasted for five hours.

One of the delegates, the Rev J M Letlabika, has drawn a vivid picture of the events as he recalled them, thirty-six years later, at the age of 81:

When I arrived [late] at the Conference, Conference members were agog about the question of schools. A caucus composed mainly of blacks was in progress when I arrived. Everybody was against handing over our schools to the state. We all detested education designed to produce servants of the white man - or an education to keep the black in perpetual servitude.

Our old missionary minded brothers (the whites in particular) felt very strongly that schools and hospitals were a means of reaching the unconverted blacks. The black majority though concerned about evangelism too, were emphatic that their children will lose the Methodist influence (religious teaching) which was expressed through religious examinations every year....

I joined a group of black brethren - they were all dead against handing over - But the Govt. dangled the sword of Damocles - 'If you refuse to hand over your schools - then you will [lose] teachers' subsidy - salaries - [sic]. Most conference representatives (laymen and women) come from the teaching profession. Though they hated the system - economic considerations weighed heavily - this was the one factor which swayed conference into sullen submission. I don't remember any voting to have taken place. There were two men in that conference whose views dominated discussions. They were the late Dr Webb and Rev S Mokitimi. Dr Webb addressed a special session of conference on this issue, characteristic of his attitude - his criticisms of the Govt's intentions were devastating. But when in the tail of his speech - he jibbed into acceptance, I could not restrain myself - I made an audible remark of rejection. All eyes turned to me - but then I had already been cowed down by the teachers dilemma (salaries) I could not stand boldly to move a counter proposal - and the matter almost went off by default ... I mentioned Rev Mokitimi ... he said outside to a group: 'Gentlemen ('a re eo bonang moo bana ba rona ba shoelang teng') 'let us follow the route which leads to the doom of our children - at least let us witness where they will be buried' ... Webb and Mokitimi had already been talked into submission by the establishment. With the fall of the Methodist church the govt. had won a decisive battle - only the Roman Catholics fought to the bitter end.¹⁸

The fact that such memories have remained would seem to indicate something of the depth of feeling that was generated on that occasion.

18. Letter to the author, July 1990.

Dr Simon Gqubule¹⁹ recalls the Rev E L Cragg, Warden of Wesley House, Fort Hare, having told the Methodist theological students there "that Dr Nkomo influenced conference on this debate when he said: 'We cannot let our children go to the streets.'"²⁰

In his report on the work at Healdtown for the year 1954, the Rev S G Pitts (who had presented the Board of African Education's recommendations to the Conference) traced the developments during the year. His is the fullest account available of the proceedings of the Conference:

Conference ... addressed itself in prolonged consideration to this whole issue. It had to face the fact that to try to run the schools on a 75% subsidy would mean that the fees would have to be raised beyond what many African parents could pay²¹, while the difficulties in staffing with the Church and not the Department as employer would be enormous. To close the schools down on the other hand would mean the withdrawal of schooling facilities for many thousands of African children. The Government had suggested that in such circumstances it would build its own schools. That, however, would take a long time and the only loser meanwhile would be the African child. In the circumstances, therefore, and after listening to a moving plea from an African mother (a representative at the Conference) not to desert the children, the Conference decided that the only course it could follow, while deploring the introduction of a concept of 'Bantu Education', was to preserve the schools for our African children by transferring the control of them to the Government and the African people at large (Healdtown, 1954:4-5).

19. Past Principal of John Wesley College, Federal Theological Seminary, Pietermaritzburg. He was a first-year student at Fort Hare in 1954.

20. Letter to the author, 6.2.1991.

21. Dugmore had calculated that if the State subsidy was reduced by 25%, fees would have to be increased from £24 to £35. (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58. Christian Council File).

The fateful decision having been made, a Committee - its members unnamed in the Methodist Newsletter report - was appointed to draft a statement for publication. Grant, reporting to the Methodist Newsletter commented:

It is brief, for it is the result of patient and careful committee work ... Its terse sentences are epochmaking. We detest the policy underlying this Act. Yet we have responsibilities. So far as conditions allow, we must see to it that the needs of our people for a truly Christian education continue to be met (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1954:10).

The final result was a four-point "Public Statement on Bantu Education"²², which was accompanied by a directive from Conference "that this statement shall be read and explained to the Methodist people by all Ministers in African Circuits and Institutions" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1954:2). Apparently it was not thought to be of interest or significance to other Church members.

The first point in the Statement condemned the policy underlying Bantu Education: "A policy which in effect aims at conditioning the African people to a predetermined position of subordination in the State is incompatible with the Christian principles for which the Church stands." The second point indicated that the Church had decided to hand over its schools "in order to provide for the immediate educational needs of the African people", but expressed its intention that the

²². See Appendix E.

Church should "continue to exercise a Christian influence upon education wherever possible" (Conference. Minutes, 1954:102). The other two points dealt with administrative details.

Reactions to the Conference Decision

Within less than a month it was apparent that not everybody was happy with the Church's decision. In a scathing front-page article, Torch condemned what it regarded as the hypocritical decision of the Methodist Church to reject the "policy" of Bantu Education, without rejecting the Act itself:

The official policy statement of the Methodist Church of South Africa on the Bantu Education Act and the transfer of schools for African children ... makes shameful reading. Not only does the Church not reject the Act, but it sets about assisting the State in the operation of this Act ... It is very doubtful whether all the African delegates to Queens-town could have been fully aware of the implacable opposition of the majority of enlightened Africans to the provisions of the Bantu Education Act. Even if they were, would they have taken active and decisive steps against the stand of their Church? (Torch, 2.11.1954).

In a letter to Pitts, Webb made reference to the "scurrilous front page article"²³, but otherwise no reaction to that attack has been traced.

The extent to which students at the various Institutions

23. Webb to Pitts, 22.11.1954 (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58).

reacted may never be known, as so many of the records, reports and correspondence of the Institutions have been lost. Whether a connection between the Conference decision and student reactions would ever have been acknowledged by the church officials writing such reports is also open to question.²⁴ However, in a letter to Pitts following the Healdtown disturbances, Webb commented that

... Dugmore tells me that there is much real resentment in the hearts of students under the surface over our attitude in regard to the Bantu Education Act ... [He] fully expects some kind of demonstration at the time of the handing over of our Institutions and Schools, if not before. We shall see.²⁵

If such protests and demonstrations did occur, no record of them has been traced. The comment is, however, noteworthy, as it is the only recorded instance that has been found of anyone in the 'white' leadership of the Church acknowledging that there was anger among African Methodists about the decision.

Webb's own reading of the situation was somewhat different. In a later letter to Pitts, he indicated his belief that "as far as I can judge the position ... our people up here" (in the Transvaal) had accepted that the closure of all the schools would not have been a wise response:

Our African people, particularly, seem to be

24. The official records of the disturbance at Healdtown in November 1954 are available (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58), but give no indication of any connection between the events of that night, and the Conference decision.

25. Webb to Pitts, 22.11.1954 (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58).

pleased insofar as anybody can be pleased with what we are confronted with ... I can see some hard bargaining ahead, but I am quite sure that we must not let go easily what we are able to retain, and particularly in regard to Hostels we must try to retain the whiphand.²⁶

Opinion on the future control of the hostels had been very divided in the pre-Conference discussions: Webb reflected here the opinion that the Church would still be able to exert a considerable Christian influence through its hostels.

Gqubule commented on the fact that there was no response from Methodist students at Fort Hare to the Conference decision:

Wesley House ... where Methodist students (ministerial and lay) were accommodated, should have given some lead as the most enlightened Methodist 'black' community in the country ... Perhaps, one reason for [the] lack of response was that Fort Hare itself was not affected. Fort Hare students did not realize that the logic of apartheid education was that sooner or later Fort Hare would have to fall in line with the rest of the educational institutions that were taken over.²⁷

In December 1954, an Inter-Racial Conference of Church Leaders was held in Johannesburg, at which the Rev S M Mokitimi spoke on "The Church's Contribution to South Africa". He emphasised the importance of the churches' role in education, and then continued: "The era of mission schools closes with the impressive figures indicated below ... " (God's Kingdom in multi-racial

26. Webb to Pitts, 1.12.1954 (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58).

27. Letter to the author, 6.2.1991.

South Africa, 1955:29). There was no word of regret at the impending closure, or criticism of the policy that had forced that closure. One wonders whether he was too polite to express his real feelings on the subject at such a gathering, or if he had simply accepted that the decision of the Conference was final.

There have been suggestions that the majority of 'white' Christians took no real interest in the whole question of the implementation of Bantu Education, because it did not affect them directly. Three letters published in the Christian Recorder, however, indicate that there was some reaction to the Church's decision from outside the Church hierarchy.

In the first, D Ellenberger²⁸ of Johannesburg, complained that ordinary Church members had not been informed about the developments in African education, and had "only the haziest notion of what was at stake". Ellenberger noted that regular contributors to the Church's mission fund were justified in wondering whether the new moves had nullified the Church's mission work to a large extent. S/he complained of lack of consultation with the membership, in similar vein to the Church leadership's complaints about the Government's failure to consult with the churches. "At what meeting, open to me, has the matter

28. Attempts to trace this contributor have been unsuccessful. She was possibly a member of one of the societies in the Johannesburg North Circuit, a business-woman and not someone closely involved with education (de Villiers to the author, 14.10.1990).

been ventilated?" (Christian Recorder 4(21), 1954:2).

In reply, another contributor, identified only by the initials EEH, wrote with considerable feeling:

We have a very hazy notion of all that the Bantu Education Act implies. Is our Methodist Church tamely to submit to all that a few men with seemingly [sic] lack of principle, lack of vision, lack of Christian view, wish to press on us to suit their own narrow purposes? ... If non-cooperation is the answer to this present serious problem, let it be so ... Let us as a Church not acquiesce tamely, but take a definite stand, hold what belongs to us, and continue our Missionary work as before with no interference from anyone. Christ's injunctions guide us, not those of a few human beings. If we do not stand, the door is opened, and worse will follow (Christian Recorder 4(25), 1954:2).

The third letter was from Dr Robert Forsyth²⁹. He also complained about the lack of consultation with Church members: he suggested that full details should have been circulated to all Methodists concerning the Church's current expenditure on African schools, and estimates of what it would cost to run them with a reduced subsidy. He wondered if some of the Institutions might have been retained if subscriptions or donations had been forthcoming. "This was a great challenge to Methodism and Methodists ... There is a ... grave danger that the action of Conference will lessen the interest our own people take in missionary work" (Christian Recorder 4(36), 1955:7).

29. A medical doctor, and well-known Methodist layman from Fish Hoek in the Cape. According to his daughter, Mrs Molly Neville, he would have been in his Eighties at the time that he wrote this letter (Phone-call. October, 1990.)

In part response to Forsyth's letter, "Methodist" (who had been in charge of a Government Girls' School) wrote:

There were Methodists indignant at the attitude Conference took with regard to our mission schools. It is too late to rectify the grave wrong done to them? Must we, a great Missionary Church, tamely submit to the wishes and dictates of a small number who have no interest whatsoever in the soul and welfare of the non-Europeans, but only in what can be got out of them to make the lot of the European more comfortable? ... It needs no deep thinking now to assert that the Mission work will suffer. It is in the hands of the Government (Christian Recorder 4(38), 1955:2).

This is hardly a fiery statement compared with those made by other African writers, but it is certainly the most vehement reaction published in the religious press. It drew a response from a Headmaster, "Also a Methodist", who urged people "not [to] get panicky about the Native Affairs Department's Education Department taking over the Mission Schools ... [for] the change may prove to be a blessing in disguise" (Christian Recorder 4(42), 1955:2).

A further statement was published by Dr David Bandey, with reference to some critical comparisons being made between the Methodist Church's decisions, and those taken by the Roman Catholic Church and the Southern Transvaal Diocese of the Anglican Church:³⁰

30. Webb also expressed reservations on this score. In a letter to the Rev T A Beetham, Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society in Britain, he expressed regret that Huddleston and Reeves "should be regarded as the shining example of the line Christian opposition to the Government should take" (Webb to Beetham, 25.1.1955 (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955)).

It is by no means easy to summarize the reasons which have led the Methodist Church, through many hours of prayer, thought and discussion, to its conclusions, for these conclusions are not issuing in a simple withdrawal from the work, or an equally simple attempt to carry on independently (Christian Recorder 4(42), 1955:1).

He spelt out in detail the Church's situation under the new dispensation, and concluded:

If our Church has erred in this matter, the error is of judgement and not of ill-will. Those who are in the midst of the work and have also been in the discussions, are truly convinced that this is the way to obey God and to serve the African people (Christian Recorder 4(42), 1955:5).

Such a statement warns against any hasty and facile criticism of the decisions taken by the Church leaders.

The role of people such as Mr F J de Villiers and Mr J H Dugard in encouraging the churches to comply with the Government's plans for Bantu Education has already been noted. Mr George Caley had been principal of the High School at Healdtown. Of him, the Rev S le Grove Smith, Chairman of the Queenstown District, wrote to Webb:

I am sorry the Inspectors troubled you. Caley, 'ex Healdtown and all that' is most critical of missions. It is he who is responsible for the story circulating in these parts that all Mission Schools were built with Community money and therefore do not belong to the Churches ... Caley thinks we should hand over the whole thing to the NAD.³¹

There is no indication as to what gave rise to these

31. Smith to Webb, 1.4.1955 (TD: President's Correspondence).

comments, but it would appear that the Church leadership was under pressure from those of its own members who supported the new Government policies.

**Responses articulated by the President of the
Conference, 1954-55**

Webb served his second term of office as President in 1954/55, and as President his statements on the Church's response to Bantu Education were widely reported. If they represent the views of the Church leadership, and not simply his own views, they give an interesting insight into just how quickly the Methodist leadership came to terms with Verwoerdian policies.

In his first Presidential letter after Conference, Webb wrote:

Never in my own lifetime, at least, have we been called upon to make such weighty and far-reaching decisions ... Our trusteeship in this field [African education] is a most responsible one, and I pray daily that we shall be guided by Divine wisdom to come to right decisions (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1954:1).

Later that month, he complained of the lack of any meaningful consultation with the churches: "... to all intents and purposes we have been kicked out."

However, he conceded that the Methodist Church had adopted the attitude "that the education envisaged by the Act is better than no education at all" (Cape Times, 27.11.1954).

In the December edition of the Methodist Newsletter, Webb reported on an interview which he and Dugmore had had with Mr F J de Villiers, in an attempt to get some clarity over future developments in African education:

Having taken the major decision at Conference to transfer our schools, however heavy-hearted we are about it, we must now seek to be as helpful as possible, bearing in mind always the interests of the children presently in our schools (Methodist Newsletter, 1.12.1954:3).

That last sentiment recurred regularly in statements made during the course of 1955. Commenting on the refusal of some Black ministers to serve on the new school boards, Webb said: "This is understandable ... But this does seem to me to be a way whereby we may continue to exercise an influence on the direction and spirit of the education of our children" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.4.1955:3).

Later that month, the desire to be "as helpful as possible" was clearly articulated in an address that Webb gave in Durban:

Many of the fears which we first expected are not being realized ... The Act is a serious attempt by the Government to rationalize Native education and to seek to overcome many of the anomalies which existed ... The co-operation of our church has been sincerely sought by those in charge of the operation of the Act. We shall continue to co-operate as far as we possibly can ... we have got to see how the thing works (Cape Argus, 23.4.1955).

Offers of funds to support church schools appear to have come from various quarters in Britain and the United

States of America. In response to a letter from the Rev T A Beetham, Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society in Britain, Webb elaborated on the Conference decision not to support the establishment of private Church schools. He suggested that African delegates to Conference were not in favour of such schools, partly because the concept was so foreign to them, and partly because of an unwillingness to support a project "which would be for the benefit of the more financially competent to the exclusion of the large rank and file of our membership."³²

As noted earlier³³, Webb was not sympathetic towards those African Methodist teachers, whom he saw as being unwilling make any sacrifices in order to enable to Church to retain some of its schools. In the same letter to Beetham, he sharply criticised such teachers:

It is an interesting commentary on the situation in this country that African teachers, as a whole, have been interestingly silent about the ideological implications of this Bantu Education Act. In other words, they think they see which side their bread is buttered, and they don't want to lose either the bread or the butter.³⁴

In a later letter to Beetham, Webb asserted that "the majority of teachers in all mission schools secretly

32. Webb to Beetham, 23.11.1954 (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955).

33. Webb to Mntyati, 24.8.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

34. Webb to Beetham, 23.11.1954 (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955).

were glad that this new Act was coming into operation"
(Emphasis in original).³⁵

Such comments give cause to wonder again about the failure of the Church leadership to hear what was being said by the teachers' organizations. Had such remarks been published in South Africa, they would no doubt have elicited scathing comment from CATA and TATA.

On a number of occasions, Webb reiterated his belief that it would have been inappropriate for the Church to have defied the Government, mainly because of the effect that such a stand would have had on African education. In 1954, the Methodist Church administered approximately 2 000 schools, at which 200 000 students were enrolled, and 5 000 teachers employed. On a number of occasions, Webb stated that, taking such figures into consideration, it would have been highly irresponsible for the Church to have forced the closure of all those schools.

In March 1955, Webb wrote to Beetham:

Personally I do not think much of the idea of running one or two purely private Church schools in the Union. The influence would be infinitesimal, and if it were construed as an act of defiance, that degree of influence would be further minimised.³⁶

35. Webb to Beetham, 25.1.1955 (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955).

36. Webb to Beetham, 25.3.1955 (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955).

Mr W J Williams, Lay General Treasurer of the Methodist Church of South Africa, shared Webb's views:

As I see it our positive reaction has been to get the very best terms and conditions for our African people from a Government whose legislation is fixed and in the main unalterable, and I believe, that while we must protest, we can do more for the people we endeavour to serve by negotiation, than by an outright refusal to have anything to do with the legislation.³⁷

Ironically, the South African churches' acceptance of apartheid practices within their own structures, was a complicating factor. Webb highlighted this factor in his correspondence with Beetham:

This battle must be fought, I feel, not along the advance line of education, but further back in the stronghold of apartheid as an overriding policy ... In how far can we beat against the bulwarks of apartheid as a Government policy, when in our churches generally, we practise this very thing - to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, including the Africans and Coloureds themselves?³⁸

The British Methodist Church had watched developments closely, and initially it had commended the MCSA on its "courageous stand", adding that it would "do all in [its] power to support and strengthen them" (Cape Times, 29.10.1954). At the beginning of 1955, however, committees both in South Africa and in Britain expressed concern that "certain misconceptions" had arisen in Britain over the South African Church's decision to hand

37. Williams to Webb, 18.3.1955 (TD: President's Correspondence).

38. Webb to Beetham, 25.1.1955 (NMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955).

over its mission schools to the Government (TD: Schools General Correspondence. African Affairs ... Committee Minutes, 27.1.1955).

It was agreed that Webb should visit Britain in May 1955, accompanied by Mr W J Williams. No consideration seems to have been given to the possibility of a 'black' Methodist accompanying Webb, nor were any questions apparently raised in Britain on that score. Prior to his departure, Webb received a letter from the Rev William Illsley³⁹, which suggests that there may well have been an unwillingness on the part of some of the Church leadership to believe that the Government had any ulterior motives in its plan for Bantu Education:

Some British Methodists regard our attempt at co-operation with the Government in Bantu Education as a fatal compromise. I'm sure you will be able to show them a picture of the alternative, tsotsi-ism. One African woman made this comment to me: "The loaf may have some sand in it, but it is better than having no bread at all" ... The impression that the Afrikaners are the big bad wolves and the English-speaking people the Knights in shining armour needs correction ... the majority [of Afrikaners] are kindly and partriarchal in their treatment of the Africans ... beneath the crust of hard political feeling there is a vast wealth of goodwill shown in all the basic human relationships. In all the contacts that my wife and I have had with the OFS Govt. officials & Executive members of the Administration we have been treated with the utmost courtesy and consideration as we have presented our appeals for education or medical work (Emphasis in the original).⁴⁰

39. Chairman of the Kimberley and Bloemfontein District, and minister at the Moroka Mission at Thaba 'Nchu.

40. Illsley to Webb, 16.4.1955 (TD: Presidential Correspondence).

Webb prepared a memorandum on South African Methodism before his arrival in Britain⁴¹, in which he noted that "the full implications of the Bantu Education Act have still to evidence themselves", and that the Act had been "taken through all its stages without consultation with the major partners in the old educational set-up" (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955). He expressed his views on the Act quite unequivocally:

... the Bantu Education Act was not entirely bad. It has ironed out many anomalies that existed under the old Provincial system. It will provide education in the lower classes for twice the number of children who could possibly be accommodated before. Education had completely outstripped the competence of the Churches to handle it ... Our share in mission education was confined mainly to administration, at the burden of which our men were grumbling and complaining (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955).

A statement was issued in London by the British Methodist Church during Webb's visit in much the same vein: it was widely publicised in both the British and the South African press, and elicited some strong reactions. According to the statement, Dr Webb said:

The Bantu Education Act is not quite the drastic kind of legislation it has been reported to be. It really follows the general trend of education in all countries, which is towards greater resumption [assumption?] of responsibility by the State⁴² ... Further education [beyond the age of 10 or 12 years] will be available to those who indicate by examination that they are likely to benefit from it (Star, 20.5.1955).

41. It is probable that this was prepared in anticipation of a Press Conference on his arrival in Britain (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955).

42. While his comment on education trends in other parts of the

Writing to Beetham shortly before his departure from Britain, Webb commented on the fact that there had been "a demonstration against me among some of our African people on the East Rand, following a paper report that I approved of the Bantu Education Act! So, apparently I shall have something to clear up when I return."⁴³

In letters to the Rand Daily Mail, the Star, and the Bantu World, Webb objected to the implied criticism that he "had departed from principle and strengthened the Government's hand". He asserted that his remarks had been made in the light of claims in Britain that all Christian influence in African education was to be excluded, and that African education would essentially cease at Standard Two. "In all fairness such misstatements, I felt, should not be allowed to go unchallenged, and it was in this context that I said what I did."⁴⁴ He affirmed the 1954 Conference statement on Bantu Education, and noted that the Church had reserved the right to withdraw the school building leases if it was not happy with the way the system operated in the coming years. He spelt out his views in a similar fashion in the July edition of the Methodist Newsletter. It is interesting to note that he

world was undoubtedly valid, he failed to point out that the essential difference lay in the commitment of the S A Government to the policy of CNE, and in the determination of the Government to take control of Bantu Education, so that children might learn right from the beginning of their schooling to accept unquestioningly the inferior status of the 'Native' in S A society.

43. Webb to Beetham, 27.5.1955 (MMS: Dr Webb's visit, 1955).

44. Webb to Editors, 7.6.1955 (TD: President's Correspondence).

found no reason to question the suggestion that some children would not benefit from further education at the age of ten or twelve.

In retrospect it seems that what he dubbed 'misstatements' were, in fact, realistic observations on the Act as it was implemented: the majority of children, promoted automatically for the first four years of their schooling, failed to meet the requirements to continue beyond that; and even before 1954 the 'religious' input in schools had decreased considerably in significance. At the beginning of 1954, Hartshorne had written to Webb:

One of the reasons for the continuation of mission schools should be the spiritual impact of these schools, and one would expect that Scripture would be taught thoroughly in such schools. I am afraid that this is not the case in actual practice.⁴⁵

As noted previously, Bandey had also expressed concern that Christian teaching would be downgraded in secondary schools. Furthermore, anxiety for the Church to maintain control over the hostels seemed to indicate that that was seen as one way in which the Church would be able to continue to exercise a Christian influence on students, in a situation where it was essentially being ousted from African schools. The discretionary clause in the lease agreement proved to be a meaningless gesture, as were statements that the Church would only negotiate for a period of five years, after which the situation would be

45. Hartshorne to Webb, 11.1.1954 (TD: Schools General Correspondence).

reviewed. There was no place in Verwoerd's scheme for any independent action on the part of the churches.

Writing in the Methodist Newsletter, Webb complained of the "almost malicious misrepresentations" of the situation which he had encountered in Britain, particularly in the religious press, who saw "nothing good in it at all." "When I presented the facts as I know them, the inevitable reaction has been, 'Well, this puts a very different complexion on the whole thing'" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.6.1955:2). In similar vein, Beetham wrote to Grant: "Webb helped a good many people and let them see that they had to think twice about a number of issues."⁴⁶

It would seem that Webb was able to gain the support of British Methodist leaders for the South African Church's decision concerning the future of its African schools. Thus it is recorded in the Minutes of the African Affairs and Day Schools Committee that the President's visit had resulted in "an even closer link between the two Conferences than hereto for [sic]. The British Conference was advised that it could best help us by making available more manpower and letting us have money to enable us to develop African Youth Centres and Sunday Schools" (TD: Schools General Correspondence. African Affairs ... Committee Minutes, 28.6.1955).

46. Beetham to Grant, 26.7.1955 (MMS: File 8, 1954-55).

Webb himself was clearly satisfied with the outcome of his visit to Britain. It would appear, however, that he fell into the trap of defending South Africa against all odds overseas, and in the process ended up by endorsing the South African Government's right, and indeed responsibility, to administer African education, without dealing at all with the fundamental question of the philosophy of Bantu Education. Thus we find him, in May 1955, defending, at least in some measure, the scheme which he had described in September 1954 as being "fundamentally wrong" (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58. Christian Council File).

In September 1955, the meeting of the Board of African Education apparently dealt exclusively with matters relating to the transfer of the schools. Dr van Zyl, from the Head Office of the Division of Bantu Education, and Mr J H Dugard, Regional Director for the Ciskei and former principal of the Healdtown Training School, were invited to the meeting to clarify certain matters as they came up for discussion. At the end of the meeting Webb thanked the men for their attendance and "spoke of the gain that had come through personalizing the negotiations with the Department" (BAE: Minutes, 7.9.1955).

In his last Presidential letter to the Methodist Newsletter, Webb summed up the situation regarding the schools as follows:

We are at another fork in the road in our

missionary history ... We have been compelled to relinquish all our African schools and institutions to Governmental control. This could have been a quite shattering blow, but I do not believe that it will prove so, provided two things happen. The first is that we maintain as strong a spiritual influence in the new set-up as possible, without becoming too deeply involved in the new administrative machinery, and the second that we accept what has happened as an opportunity to direct our energies into new channels more closely related to the primary function and purpose of the Church (Methodist Newsletter, 1.10.1955:1-2).

At the end of a very heavy Presidential year, Webb adopted an essentially pragmatic approach, regarding what had happened as simply another milestone in the missionary history of the Church. No further reference was made to the opposition which the Bantu Education Act had provoked, or even to the objections which the Church had raised to the policy of Bantu Education at the previous Conference.

The 1955 Conference and Beyond

A report on the 1955 Conference mentioned that a statement on Bantu Education "covering several pages" had been debated, amended and approved: "The general purport is that while we have felt compelled to relinquish control of our Schools ... we are determined to exercise a Christian influence upon education

wherever possible" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1955:8).

The 1955 Methodist Missionary Review included two articles on the future of education: the Rev E W Grant wrote on 'The End of an Epoch', and the Rev S G Pitts on 'The Beginning of an Era'. Both referred to the objections the Church had to the content of Bantu Education, and its rootedness in Apartheid: what would have been a normal progression in any other country (the transfer of education from church to State control), was fraught with problems for the churches in South Africa. Both stressed the importance of the Church responding constructively to the challenge which faced it. Grant urged that increased attention be paid to Sunday School and Youth work in the African congregations: "Here and now there suddenly lies open before us an immense field of services with possibilities beyond our present sight ... The end of an epoch must be the beginning of another" (Methodist Missionary Review, 1955:27).

In similar vein, Pitts commented: "What the Church now faces ... is really the beginning of a new era in its educational work, and it behoves it now to learn what opportunities the new set-up will afford and seize them to the full" (Methodist Missionary Review, 1955:34).

One possibility was to make better use of the time allotted to religious instruction in schools. He suggested that the situation in the Institutions might

not change very markedly since the Church's intention was to continue to exercise a Christian influence through the Hostels.

A year later, however, much of the optimism was gone, and in the 1956 Review it was noted: "The Bantu Education Act is virtually a tombstone, marking the end of active missionary influence" (Methodist Missionary Review, 1956:4). The report of the General Missionary Secretary, Dr Gordon Mears⁴⁷, echoed those sentiments:

We fostered education although it became an embarrassment, because of our belief that Christian education was the most potent factor for the overthrow of the kingdoms of ignorance, witchcraft and superstition. It is no longer within our power to mould, or even to influence, except very slightly. (Methodist Missionary Review, 1956: 42)

Mears suggested that the Church might look to the development of literacy programmes and the production of suitable literature, as an alternative way forward for mission work.

Webb was succeeded as President by the Rev Stanley B Sudbury⁴⁸. During 1956, little was reported on the topic of African education: the main concern of the Church in that year was the celebration of 150 years of

47. The first layperson to be appointed General Missionary Secretary, in 1951. He had been Secretary of Native Affairs under the United Party Government from 1944/5 to 1949, when he was replaced by Dr W M M Eiselen.

48. Chairman of the Cape District, 1949-1950 and of the Natal District, 1955-1960, after which he was appointed Secretary of Conference. He served the city centre congregations in both Cape Town and Durban.

Methodism in South Africa. At the 1956 Conference, tributes were paid both to the pioneer missionaries of the last century, and to the present Wardens of the Institutions who had "wisely and courageously planned a new strategy against an entirely new situation." It was also noted that "the Bantu Education Act becomes a practical policy because the Government has entered into a great heritage of devoted and sacrificial effort on the part of some of the best missionaries we have had in the service of the Church in South Africa" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.1.1956:4).

The new President for 1956/7, the Rev William Illsley⁴⁹, spoke of the Church's changing attitude to Bantu Education, noting that its initial objections were based on Verwoerd's interpretation of the Act in Parliament. His address merits quoting at some length, as it shows clearly how quickly the facts of the story became muddled:

Dr Nhlapo commented [at the time of the introduction of the Bill]: 'If a man told me that he disliked my way of living so much that he would poison me at the first opportunity he got, I would be most unwilling to accept any food that he offered me - however good that food might be.' Both Africans and Europeans saw this Bill as the offer of Christmas pudding with arsenic sauce! It was only when we saw it assuming a better shape and spirit in the Act and in the syllabus that we saw possibilities of co-operation as in the best interests of the African. There are features that are objectionable: but in Hostel Institutions, we are free to exercise our

49. Chairman of the Kimberley and Bloemfontein District, 1941-1945 and 1955-1961. He was stationed at the mission station at Thaba Nchu for 18 years.

Christian witness as before. We do not and we dare not share in giving a specially 'tailored' education to fit an African child for a predetermined status of subordination (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1956:13).

Many would say that in the very act of handing their schools over to the Government, the Church did unquestionably take a "share" in the implementation of Bantu Education. Mr F J de Villiers is reported to have told a meeting of African teachers in New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, in March 1955 that "the transfer of control from church schools would not have been possible without the co-operation of the churches. Their full co-operation had been obtained except in the case of a minority of about 1 per cent" (Cape Argus, 17.3.1955).

In September 1956, the Board of African Education noted that 'subversive propaganda' was being circulated about the Methodist Church's policy in respect of Bantu Education. It was recommended that the Church should follow the lead of other denominations that had printed a statement in the vernacular on their stance on Bantu Education for distribution free of charge to their members. The following year, however, it was reported that the Church had not been able to bear the cost of such a project: instead, a circular letter would be sent by the Secretary of Conference to Superintendents of African Circuits with the request that the information be circulated among their members. No copies of such a circular have been seen, and it is not known whether it was sent

out. Whether it would have had the desired effect is, in any event, open to question.

In the ensuing years, pressure was put on the Church to adhere to government policy: two recorded instances have been traced. In the 1957/58 Kilnerton Report, it was noted that the NAD had agreed to an extension of Kilnerton's special dispensation (to continue to exist in a 'white Group Area') till the end of 1960, on condition that the hostels be handed over to the Government at the beginning of 1958. "The Department refused to give cogent reasons for this demand and we were left with a firm conviction that it was prompted by a hostile attitude to the Church's racial policy" (CL: MS 15,270. Northern Transvaal Synod Minutes, 1958).

The Church initially refused to agree to the Departmental proposals, and made plans to close Kilnerton, but found itself under pressure both from the Department and from African church members. In the light of "a more reasonable approach" on the part of the Government, it was eventually decided to recommend that the hostels should be handed over, provided that a resident chaplaincy could be retained. The Report, unsigned but presumably written by Dugmore, concluded with the following statement:

The decision once again rests with the Department. As far as the Church is concerned, Kilnerton is available for the purpose of Bantu education for as long as it may be required, providing essential Christian

principles are not violated (CL: MS 15,270.
Northern Transvaal Synod Minutes, 1958).

Such a statement seems to beg the question as to whether there was any possibility of Bantu Education being implemented without Christian principles being violated, but those who read and accepted the report appear not to have queried the matter.

The other reference to Government dissatisfaction with Methodist Church policy appeared in the Minutes of the April 1958 meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of African Education, in which reference was made to "a long and very objectionable circular issued by the Department." The circular stated that "the Churches were in the Institutions on sufferance, and that they could not be allowed to continue there if they did not carry out the Government's apartheid policy." The cause of the alarm was the "social mixing" which took place at the Institutions, and it was decreed that all such activity was to cease immediately. On this occasion, the Committee took a firm stand, and urged Wardens "to continue to ensure, so far as they could, that the Church made its full contribution to interracial harmony and understanding in and through its hostels" (BAE: Minutes, 22.4.1958). For how long this did in fact continue, it has not been possible to ascertain.

The Cape District Education Committee had oversight over very few African schools, and the controversy over the

implementation of Bantu Education went virtually unnoticed in the records of its meetings. In 1954, the Committee passed a resolution on the implementation of compulsory education for African children. No mention was made at all of Bantu Education. The following year it was simply recorded that "as a result of the implementation of the Bantu Education Act, seven African schools, comprising 2 000 scholars and 48 teachers, have passed out of the control of our Church in this District" (CL: MS 17,004). One interesting point, however, is the comment that a new unaided African school had been opened at Karatara in the Knysna Circuit, with 36 on the roll; in the following year, it was noted that the school was attended by African as well as 'Coloured' pupils, but that is the last that is heard of it. Another such unaided school was evidently established in South West Africa, for in 1957 it was recorded that it "continues to exist in spite of many difficulties and discouragements" (CL: MS 17,004). One wonders who took the initiative in the establishment of these schools, whether they were ever officially registered, and whether the Church hierarchy was aware of and approved of their existence. Were these schools indicative of small pockets of resistance to Church withdrawal, and were any others established elsewhere? Once again details are sadly lacking.

Writing in 1959, Professor Leslie A Hewson⁵⁰ divided the period of the Methodist Church's involvement in African education into three distinct phases. In the earliest, fairly short-lived phase, the Church offered "education for Africans", which would enable them to take their place in "the community of civilized men." The second phase, commencing towards the end of the nineteenth century, saw an adaptation of the original optimistic beliefs about the future status of Africans in society. It became accepted policy that, because of social, economic and political limitations, Africans would not benefit from the sort of general education which had been favoured during the first phase. That was the era of "Native education", which prepared Africans "for life in the community to which these limitations confined him" (Hewson, 1959:307). The third phase, commencing in 1955, was that of "Bantu Education", and of this, Hewson wrote: "None can doubt that there was a radical divergence of aim between Education for Africans as understood by the Churches which had pioneered and developed it, and Bantu Education as understood by the Minister of State resolved to apply the policy of Apartheid" (Hewson, 1959:317).

Unfortunately no record had been found of Hewson's reactions to Bantu Education earlier in the decade⁵¹:

50. Professor of New Testament Studies at Rhodes University, and Church Archivist.

51. Hewson's papers are now in the Cory Library, Grahamstown, but were not available for research purposes in July 1990.

his comments as a historian and an educator would surely be worth reading. While the statement quoted above was written several years after the implementation of the Bantu Education Act, in the context of a study of Healdtown as "a Methodist experiment in education", it is interesting in that specific reference is made to the aim of education. That aspect seems to have been dealt with very fleetingly, if at all, by the other Methodists quoted in this section.

The statistics relating to Church membership for the period 1953-1957 provide some interesting information on trends in African membership during that period:

Year	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
European	+1105	+2290	+1521	+1700	+1909	+4237
African	+5931	+7292	+3953	+2993	+4250	+4273
Coloured	+ 703	+ 809	+ 901	+ 984	- 346	+ 883
Indian	+ 32	- 43	+ 60	+ 22	+ 46	+ 48

The drastic drop in the annual increase of African membership in the years immediately following 1954 - not matched by figures for any of the other 'groups' - may simply indicate the impact of the loss of the schools on recruitment of new members. However, it may indicate that some Methodists registered their opposition to the Methodist Church's decision on its schools in the only way open to them, by transferring their membership

elsewhere. Letlabika recalls some Methodists in Port Elizabeth and in Bloemfontein who left the Methodist Church in protest at that time.⁵²

The Fate of the Institutions

The Minutes of Conference for the years after 1955 give some indication as to what happened to the Institutions, once the buildings were leased to the Government. In most cases the Department of Bantu Education made use of the buildings for as long as it suited it to do so, after which the Church was left with buildings and property which had to be converted to other uses, or disposed of.

Reports from eighteen Institutions were presented to the 1954 Conference: that number gradually decreased as Institutions were closed down. In 1977, eleven Reports were presented, and at that Conference it was noted that the Transkei Government would take control of the remaining six Institutions in the Transkei "as soon as it is able to do so" (Conference. Minutes, 1977:144). Prior to that it would appear that the Church had had a great deal of difficulty in collecting outstanding rental money from the Transkei Government. The Church was undoubtedly the losing partner in that deal, for it was recorded that "when the Church's buildings are vacated and the Institutions are moved into new buildings erected

52. Letter to the author, July 1990.

by the Government ... the Church will make no claim for compensation in respect of its buildings (Conference. Minutes, 1977:145).

In 1980, the Moroka Institution was sold to the Bophuthatswana Government, and the Indaleni lease was not renewed. Since 1983, it has been recorded in the Minutes of Conference that efforts are being made to sell part of the Healdtown property, and retain part for industrial mission: in 1991 the property still stands derelict and unused.

Kilnerton was situated in a 'white' Group Area, and its last lease agreement expired in 1962. In 1962, Conference noted that it would not be possible to establish a Connexional School on the Kilnerton premises. It was recommended that the property should not be sold, but should be used by the Church "for the purpose of holding Retreats and courses for all racial groups" (Conference. Minutes, 1962:113). Since then, various plans and projects have been suggested for that property, including the establishment of a Museum of Methodist History in the Kilnerton Chapel. In 1990, a Teachers' Training College, under private management, was opened in part of the premises.

The revival of the Indaleni property has been largely the result of the vision of the family of the Rev H W Rist. Mrs Barbara Davies (nee Rist) testifies to being chal-

lenged at the Obedience '81 Conference of the MCSA, to ensure that the Indaleni premises were put to use by the Church in the future. As a result of the commitment of a small group of people, encouraged by the Chairman of the Natal West District, the Rev Dr Khoza Mgojo (himself a past student of Indaleni), that vision has begun to materialise. Buildings have been renovated, and several new projects established on the premises. A School for the Deaf was opened in 1986, and the premises presently house a Lay Training Project, a Conference Centre, and a Resource Centre for high school students from the local community. Plans are also in hand for the establishment of an Early Childhood Training Programme. The possibility of establishing an agricultural high school has also been investigated.

Conclusion

It is a cause for considerable regret that there has been so little response from 'black' Methodists to inquiries about the events of this period, for the records which have survived are essentially the records of what the 'white' leadership had to say on the decisions taken by the Church.

In the light of the reactions of Methodists to the Eiselen Commission, and to the Commission Report, it is hardly surprising to find that the 1954 Conference took

the line that it did. There was no tradition within the Church of confronting the Government, and little consideration was apparently given to the question as to whether the Church could, in good conscience, co-operate in the implementation of Bantu Education, or not. The approach of the predominantly 'white' leadership was basically a pragmatic one, with the question of finding the money to finance the existing programme, without a State subsidy, virtually outweighing all other considerations. Gqubule's comment about Dr Nkomo, and Pitts' reference to the "moving plea of an African mother", suggest that the Conference heard what it wanted to hear during the course of the debate.

It has been alleged, too, that the majority of teachers who attended the Synods and Conferences were unwilling to risk their careers, and so supported, albeit reluctantly, the decision to hand over the schools. For them, perhaps more than any others, the stark realities of the situation were obvious, and they were faced with the dilemma referred to earlier of choosing 'the lesser of two evils': refusing to co-operate and thereby risking their jobs, or moving into the new system and attempting to ignore the Bantu Education ideology. In the ensuing years, a considerable number realized the impossibility of reconciling their own principles with Bantu Education, and gave up teaching, thereby opening the way to an increasing number of teachers trained under the Bantu Education system moving into the schools.

To what extent the Methodist leaders did consult the teachers in the schools, is not clear. No reference has been found to such efforts, other than a comment at one stage that there had not been enough time to "sound African opinion" (CL: MS 16/598/8: Box 58. Christian Council File).

From the comments recorded in this chapter, it is clear that at least some of the Church leadership was quite ready to hand over the burden of African education to the State. The fact that elsewhere in Africa the educational work, which had been initiated by the churches was gradually being taken over by State Education Departments, may have encouraged them in that view as well.

Increasing student protests at many of the Institutions, with the resultant damage to property and threats to lives, were another factor that may have caused the leadership to question the feasibility of continuing to provide education, when what they could offer was clearly open to unfavourable comparison with what was presented at 'white' Government schools. It was a comparatively easy matter to use such arguments to justify the Church's decision.⁵³

53. Gqubule commented on Dr Nkomo's remark about not allowing "children to go to the streets": "Such arguments are very convenient scapegoats when they re-inforce views that are already held by those who make decisions" (Letter to the author, 6.2.1991).

The most disturbing aspect of the events recorded in this chapter is the rapid shift in emphasis that took place: in 1954, the leadership declared "its opposition to the policy underlying Bantu Education" (Conference. Minutes, 1954:102) and condemned Bantu Education in principle; in 1955, Webb publicly complimented the Government on its moves "to rationalize Native education" (Cape Argus, 23.4.1955); in 1956, Illsley referred to "possibilities of co-operation as [being] in the best interests of the African" (Methodist Newsletter, 1.11.1956:13), and Pitts expressed the hope "that the unsettlement caused by the transfer of control of African education is now on its way out" (Healdtown, 1956:4). Even if one accepts that the Church had no real choice but to comply with the demands of the Government, there still remains a question mark over the apparent acceptance of Bantu Education within so short a space of time.

As the years passed, it became clear that the Government would take advantage of the educational facilities which the Church could provide for as long they needed them. Once the Government vacated the premises, the Church was faced with a new problem: the rent income ceased, and there was no money to renovate the buildings and convert them for use in other ways. Many past students have expressed dismay at what has happened to the Institutions of which they were so proud in years gone by.

One can speculate as to why so little effort was apparently made to retain at least one of the larger Institutions as a private Methodist school - a move suggested by various people at the time. One can also speculate as to what would have happened had the Church leadership adopted a more confrontational position in relation to the Government. Suffice it to say that the optimism of those within the Church who believed that accommodation with the Government would be in the best interests of all concerned, was ill-founded. The Church was gradually squeezed out of the education arena in the years following 1954. In addition, it lost credibility with its African members, who even today complain that the Church let them down by its failure to take a firm stand against the Government.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

There can be little doubt that the appointment of the Eiselen Commission in 1949, and the subsequent recommendations of that Commission, had an impact on African education far more devastating than most people anticipated. What some believed to be a sincere attempt to provide more adequately for the educational needs of African children, turned out to be an educational disaster.

Those who welcomed the fact that the State was at last accepting responsibility for African education did not foresee the drastic drop in educational standards which would occur, when basic education was made available to far more children, but higher education was severely restricted, and 'Bantu Education teachers' were trained according to Government dictate. Those in the Church who argued in favour of co-operation with the State in the implementation of the system, did not foresee that the time would come when they would be simply cast aside by the State, and left with empty premises, and no money to pay for the maintenance of buildings and property.

On the other hand, little attention seems to have been given to suggestions that the Methodist Church should retain some of its Institutions as private Church schools, despite the fact that funding was offered by

overseas Methodists to assist in the task. No satisfactory explanation has been found as to why that idea was not pursued: Webb simply noted at one point that African delegates the 1954 Conference rejected the idea of the Church establishing private schools which would be accessible only to those members who could afford to pay for private education. Yet other records seem to indicate that even prior to 1955, education at several of the Methodist Institutions was beyond the means of many aspirant students.

At various points in this study, the contrast between the "accommodation" responses of the 'liberals', and the "confrontation" responses of the 'radicals' has been highlighted. The 'liberal' response clearly had no impact on developments in African education. The question then needs to be asked as to the effectiveness of the 'radical' approach. Father Trevor Huddleston¹ argued then, and apparently still believes², that had the churches adopted a united, confrontational approach, and told the Prime Minister, Dr D F Malan, that "they could not co-operate in the implementation of the Act, at least some major concessions would have been won" (Huddleston, 1957:126). However, when one considers the way in which Verwoerd dealt with those teachers, parents and children

1. Priest of the Community of the Resurrection of the Anglican Church in Sophiatown, Johannesburg. He has been consistently outspoken in his condemnation of apartheid.

2. In the Foreword to Villa-Vicencio's book, Trapped in Apartheid, Huddleston wrote: "... it was a great encouragement to me ... to realize that my judgement at the time was not false and has been justified by subsequent events" (Villa-Vicencio, 1988:x).

who opposed the introduction of Bantu Education³, it seems unlikely that even a united church voice would have persuaded him to alter, in any significant measure, the programme he had adopted, since it was such an essential element of the whole apartheid scheme.

A careful reading of the records of the Methodist Church during the period under consideration, reveals a great deal of ambivalence among those 'whites' involved in education about the Church's involvement in that sphere. Financial constraints, administrative work on behalf of the different provincial Education Departments, discontent among students (and staff, too, on occasion), problems with the maintenance of properties, and the difficulty of attracting and retaining suitable academic and non-academic staff, were just some of the difficulties faced by the Governors of the Institutions and the Managers of the schools. It is little wonder, in some ways, that many were willing - some even glad - to let the State take over from the Church a task which they were finding increasingly burdensome. One finds little evidence of the 'missionary zeal' of earlier years, in the attitude of the majority of ministers who had responsibility for African education.

Are there lessons to be learned today from the events of the early Fifties, when church leaders were faced with

3. During the schools boycott in April and May 1955, those children who stayed out of school after the deadline set by Verwoerd, were subsequently refused entry to any State school.

the choice of accommodation to the demands of the Government, or open confrontation with the Government? If the Church is to make a significant contribution in the field of education in a 'new South Africa', it seems that cognisance will need to be taken of the three themes which run through this study.

The question of funding is a crucial one, since education is such a costly affair. It needs to be remembered how little independence the Methodist Church really had in the days when the Church schools were heavily dependent on State subsidies. One cannot but wonder what is intended by the resolution of the 1990 Conference, to investigate "converting white schools into private schools, provided that continuing State funding for salaries and administration and maintenance costs can be negotiated" (Conference. Minutes, 1990:205). The rationale for such a recommendation surely needs to be spelt out very clearly, before any action is taken on that resolution.

Another problem highlighted by this study, is the fact that the Church was unable to provide adequate accommodation and facilities at the majority of schools and Institutions, because sufficient money was never forthcoming from its own members to support its educational work. Similar problems are faced today by those pre-school centres run by individual societies of the Methodist Church which have, on principle, refused to accept

a State subsidy. The question as to whether the Church can, in good conscience, accept funding from sources which have ideological 'strings' attached, also needs to be considered.

Accusations of elitism were made against the Institutions, in particular, because the fees charged - inadequate in themselves to cover student costs - were beyond the means of many parents. To what extent are the educational facilities provided by the Church today - both in pre-schools and Connexional schools - catering for an elite group of people who can afford to pay the fees which the Church has to charge in order to keep such schools functional?

Clearly the Church is once more faced with a dilemma in the matter of funding: the problem needs to be addressed however, and the various options available to meet the challenges, considered carefully.

The second issue - that of 'white-dominated' leadership structures - is not as problematic today as it was in the Fifties, but there is a danger that Synods and Conferences may be dominated by the views of the most eloquent speakers in a debate, regardless of whether such speakers are reflecting generally held views or not. Those charged with responsibility for education need to ensure that, as far as possible, they are well-informed on the most recent developments in the education debate at a

national level, and able to challenge those who put forward impassioned, but unsubstantiated, pleas for the Church to follow one course of action or another.⁴

The third issue which has been considered has been the lack of consultation with professionals, and the poor grasp of significant educational issues which marked the debates of the Fifties. There seems to be a real danger that the Church may fall into similar traps again. To date, there has been no suggestion that educationists and teachers within the Church should sit down together and engage in serious critical thinking about what it is appropriate, and what inappropriate, for the Church to do in response to the current education crisis in South Africa. Perhaps such a move could be the first step forward into the future.

The problems facing both the churches and the State in the coming decade are legion. The imbalances that have existed for so many years need to be addressed urgently: education must surely be given priority. It is to be hoped that within the Methodist Church there will be those who will continue to look for appropriate ways of meeting the needs of local communities, particularly in the area of pre-school education. In addition, there need to be those who will involve themselves in national

4. At the 1990 Cape Synod, for instance, one delegate is on record as having said: "We must aim to reintroduce the missionary education approach of bygone days" (Cape of Good Hope District Synod. Minutes, 1990:39).

educational initiatives, and provide guidance to Church leaders and members as to ways in which the Methodist Church can contribute to the resolution of the education crisis facing South Africa in the Nineties.

POSTSCRIPT

Where does the future of the Methodist Church in education lie? A number of different options have been, or are being explored, but it would seem that at the moment the leadership is in many ways casting about in the dark in an attempt to discern God's will for the future.

Calls for the Church to 'get back into education' beg the question as to whether a return to active involvement in African education is either a viable option for the Methodist Church, or an appropriate response to the problems confronting education - and 'black' education in particular - today.

After the wide-scale disruptions in 'black' and 'coloured' education in 1985, the MCSA began to address the educational crisis more specifically than it had done for many years. A resolution passed by the 1986 Conference, "noting the apparent collapse of the Department of Education and Training", urged Districts "to set forth immediately the concept of private church schools in consultation with national and regional initiatives of parents, teachers and students, and existing non-governmental educational agencies" (Conference Minutes, 1986:235-6).

The following year, Conference endorsed the establish-

ment of a "Community Based Education Programme providing enriched and compensatory education". In 1987, mention was also made of a request from the Thabong (D.F.S.) Town Council that "the major churches" should consider the establishment of church schools in Thabong, and in 1989 the Conference resolved to "declare its interest in establishing a church school in the township of Thabong" (Conference. Minutes, 1989:200). No further mention was made of that project, however, in the 1990 Minutes of Conference.

Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) schools also came under consideration in 1988 and 1989, in order to ascertain "whether such schools, under Methodist auspices, would provide a meaningful, alternative strategy of education" (Conference. Minutes, 1988:224). A number of Synods endorsed the programmes, but they were apparently rejected by the 1989 Conference. From 1987 to 1989, the Conference also commended the work being done at the Teachers' Upgrading Centre in Pietermaritzburg, and urged the setting up of similar projects in other centres.

On the agenda of the 1990 Conference was a resolution from the Natal Coastal District that the MCSA should take control of redundant 'white' schools in order to establish non-racial schools which would be governed by the MCSA; but funded by the State. The Synod requested the Conference "to declare the resolution of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to take its rightful place in

education in South Africa" (Conference. Agenda, 1990: 23). During the debate on education at Conference, it became clear that delegates had very diverse ideas about the future role of the MCSA in education in South Africa: issues raised included the provision of pre-school and educare facilities, the future of the Wesley Teachers' Training College in Cape Town, the question of financing church schools, and the urgent need for the provision of education facilities for returning exiles. As a response to the Natal resolution and the debate, "Conference declare[d] its conviction that Methodism should continue and expand its involvement in private school education" (Conference. Minutes, 1990:204).

A number of Church leaders in the Fifties suggested that the Church would have to look for alternative ways of meeting the educational needs of African Methodists. One of the suggestions was a move into the fields of literacy and vernacular publishing: the needs in those areas are still great, and consultation with others involved in such projects might well open up further new avenues for appropriate Methodist involvement in educational ventures.

Another suggestion made in the Fifties was that more emphasis would have to be placed on Sunday School and Youth Work within the Church, once the day schools were no longer under Church control. Those young people within the Church today who have availed themselves of

opportunities for 'inter-group' contacts provided by the Church have testified to the fact that, despite the almost inevitable difficulties, fears, prejudices and misunderstandings they have had to deal with, such contacts have been invaluable in 'educating' them on a personal level. Such ventures may not lie within the field of formal education, but there can be no doubt that they provide valuable opportunities for cross-cultural contacts, not always easy to arrange in other circumstances. This could also be an area in which the Church could help prepare people to take their place in a 'new South Africa'.

Pre-school and day care facilities now operate in Methodist Church premises in many centres throughout the country, and a study recently conducted for the Indaleni Mission Development Centre has suggested that the most important contribution that the Church can make to education today is in the area of Early Childhood Development. This recommendation comes at a time when the State has cut back funding for pre-school education, and suggests that if Church leaders are serious about their calls for the Church to get more involved in education again, they might be well-advised to look at areas where the Church can supplement, rather than duplicate, what the State is doing. On the other hand, there are those who would argue that a school, such as the recently

established John Wesley Primary School in Pinetown, Natal, is meeting a specific need in a specific community, i.e. the need to provide satisfactory primary education for 'black' children who had spent a year or more at the Pinetown Methodist Pre-Primary School (Dimension 20(12), 1991:4).

The four Connexional Schools - Kingswood, Kearsney, Epworth and St Stithians - all opened their doors to any who could afford to pay the fees, or who were able to obtain bursaries, in the late 1970's. A question mark remains, however, over the nature of the education being offered at those schools. As recently as 1989, Conference urged those schools "to increase the pace towards integrating their intake of students, [to] begin to build a racially balanced teaching staff, [to] build the racial balance in the personnel of their Governing Council [and] to increase their bursary provisions to enable deserving Black students [sic]" (Conference. Minutes, 1989:198-9).

It would seem that serious consideration still needs to be given to the implications of the Methodist Church's involvement in schools which have traditionally borne a "wealthy white" image, for that image is surely incompatible with the role of the Church in the 'new South Africa'. This suggests itself as an area for further research, in order that recommendations which are educationally and theologically sound, may be made concerning

the direction which the established Methodist schools should take in the Nineties.

The Church is currently involved in a variety of 'educational' projects, some of which lie right outside the bounds of traditional educational structures. Agricultural and community development projects, lay leadership programmes, training of ministers, evangelists, deaconesses and Biblewomen, pre-school education, domestic worker projects, student study centres, teacher upgrading programmes, literacy classes and African language teaching are just some of the areas of education into which the Church has moved.

The Presiding Bishop of the MCSA, the Rev Dr Stanley Mogoba, has said that "Methodism's commitment to education is still alive and well!" (Dimension 20(3), 1990:4). His concern has mainly been with the return of the Methodist Church to formal education. Perhaps greater attention needs to be focussed on the areas where the Church can be most creatively involved, rather than in simply trying to move back into the established education structures of the country.

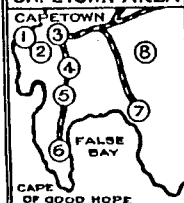
MISSION STATIONS MAP OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA



REFERENCE:
CIRCUIT CENTRES ARE INDICATED THUS: ■
MISSION STATIONS AND NUMBERED AS PER THE APPENDED TABLES.
CHURCH DISTRICT BOUNDARIES
PROVINCIAL BOUNDARIES
PRINCIPAL RIVERS
RAILWAYS
DISTRICT N° 7: [TRANSVAAL] - SHEWS CHURCH CENTRES WITHOUT ABOVE DISCRIMINATION.



CAPETOWN AREA



MISSION STATIONS REFERENCE TABLE

DISTRICT N° 1: CAPE OF GOOD HOPE	
1. CAPETOWN	9. ROBERTSON
2. CAPETOWN (Coloured)	10. KYNNA
3. MOWBRAY MISSION (Coloured)	11. MOSSEL BAY
4. WYNBERG	12. O'OKIEP
5. DIEP RIVER (Coloured)	13. WINDHOEK
6. SIMONSTOWN	14. KEETMANSHOOP
7. SOMERSET WEST & STRAND	15. LUDERITZBUCHT
8. STELLENBOCH	16. WALVIS BAY
	17. SWAKUPMUND
DISTRICT N° 2: GRAHAMSTOWN	
18. SALEM	24. PERKSDALE
19. HEALDTON	25. PEDDIE
20. TEACHERS' Training College	26. TUKU
21. ARNISHAW	27. NEWTONVALE
22. AMATOLE BASIN	28. NORTON

MISSION STATIONS: REFERENCE TABLE

DISTRICT N° 3: QUEENSTOWN	
29. LESSEYTON	55. TSBOMO
30. KANASTONE	56. BUTTERWORTH
31. MOUNT COKE	57. MPUKANE
32. TUMARA	58. IDUTYWA
33. MOUNT ARTHUR	59. GCALEKA
34. FRANSBURG	60. FORT MALAN
35. SEPLAAN	61. NQABARA
36. WOODHOUSE FOREST	62. CALA
DISTRICT N° 4: CLARKEBURY	
40. CLARKEBURY	68. CANCELE
41. COLLEGE	69. DUMSI
42. EMJANYANA	70. MOUNT WHITE
43. ENYANISWENI	71. POLANA
44. CWCWENI	72. SAMLAIVILLE
45. BOJANE	73. BASUTOLAND MISSION
46. MILE	74. MOUNT HARGREAVES
47. WEBLEYVILLE	75. EYEMBENI
48. XORA	76. ENYANISWENI
49. SEPLAAN	77. RODE
50. SHANBURG	78. ENNGEBA
51. CULUNCA	79. ENYANISWENI
52. ENYANISWENI	80. LUDEKE
53. TSITSAANA	81. PALMERTON
54. FLETCHERVILLE	
55. OSBORN	
DISTRICT N° 5: BLOEMFONTEIN & KIMBERLEY	
63. BOTHAIVILLE	73. BURGERSDORP
64. VREDE	74. ALI WAL NORTH
65. UPINGTON	75. WITTEBERGEN
66. DOUWES	76. MABONGA
67. MABONGA	77. BLIKANA
68. BASUTOLAND MISSION	
69. BASUTOLAND MISSION	
DISTRICT N° 6: NATAL	
82. ACTON HOMES	87. MAPUTA (Natal) M.M.
83. DREIFONTEN	88. UMBOMB (Natal) Mission
84. EDENDALE (College)	89. HOWEQUE
85. ENYANISWENI	90. BASUTOLAND MISSION
86. ENYANISWENI	91. VERULAM
87. GEORGETOWN	92. NIBOPENKULU
88. GEORGETOWN	
89. INDALANI (High School)	
DISTRICT N° 7: TRANSVAAL	
SEE NAMES ON MAP & NO DEFINITE TABLE OF MISSION STATIONS	

APPENDIX B

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Mr Reginald Cingo was successively a teacher and principal, and then sub-inspector and inspector of schools after the establishment of the Department of Bantu Education. In 1962, he chaired a Government Commission of Inquiry into language teaching in the Transkei, the first Government Commission on which 'black' educationists had ever served. It also seems likely that he was the R Cingo who served on the De Lange Commission of Inquiry of 1981. Within the Methodist Church he has been referred to as a "respected voice in Conference" (Dugmore. Interview, July 1989). He served on the Board of African Education from 1947, and on the Board of Education which replaced it from 1979 to 1983.

The Rev Deryck F Dugmore entered the Methodist ministry in 1935, and was involved in education for many years, serving as Governor both of Boitshoko Institution and Kilnerton. From Kilnerton, he moved to the Johannesburg College of Education as a lecturer, and at that time was actively involved with the Christian Education Movement as well. He served on the Board of African Education throughout the time that he was Governor of the Institutions, and then during his time as Chairman of the Northern Transvaal District from 1958 to 1963. He was President of the Conference in 1962/3.

Mr Richard H Godlo (? - 1972) was actively involved in politics from the 1930's, working first with the AAC, and later on the National Executive of the ANC in the 1940's. He subsequently rejected the militant attitude of the ANC Youth League, and eventually moved out of Congress politics. He was also involved with the Joint Councils, the SAIRR and the Location Advisory Boards, and was a member of the Natives Representative Council from 1937 to 1951. He served on the Board of African Education from 1947 to 1968.

Dr Kenneth R Hartshorne is a well-known educationist in South Africa, having worked in various areas of African education. He was teacher at, and later principal of, the Kilnerton Teachers' Training College, and then Inspector of Schools for some years. More recently he has served as an adviser on African education, having severed his ties with all State education structures. He was a member of the Transvaal Teachers' Association, and the SAIRR Council in the early 1950's, and a member of the Kilnerton Committee, appointed by the MCSA Conference, from 1950-1952.

Mr Nathaniel I Honono was principal of the Ngabara Methodist Secondary School at Idutywa in the Transkei, and President of CATA at the time of his dismissal by the Department of Bantu Education in 1955. He served on the CATA Executive, and was editor of Teachers Vision for a number of years. In December 1953, he was organiser of the Conference arranged by the CATA Executive to oppose the implementation of Bantu Education. He was a member of the Board of African Education from 1947 to 1959. In 1963 he left the country and settled in Tanzania.

The Rev J Wesley Hunt (1895-1977) came from Britain to South Africa in 1919, and spent most of his years in the ministry in 'mission' work, firstly in Kenya and Tanganyika, and from 1929 at Tsomo, Shawbury and Indaleni (1942-1960). He was Secretary of the Methodist Mission Fund from 1942, and as Governor of Indaleni was an ex officio member of the Board of African Education. He was President of Conference in 1952/3.

The Rev William Illsley (1895-1975) came to South Africa from Britain in the early 1920's. Most of his years in active ministry were spent in the Orange Free State, notably at the Moroka Mission at Thaba Nchu. He was Vice President of the Christian Council, and a founder member of the SAIRR. As Chairman of the Kimberley and Bloemfontein District, he was a member of the Board of African Education from 1956. In 1956/7 he was President of the Conference.

Prof Davidson D T Jabavu (1885-1959) was the first person to be appointed to the staff of the South African Native College, Fort Hare in 1916, initially as lecturer in Latin and Vernacular Languages. He was appointed Professor of Bantu Languages in 1942, and was awarded an honorary doctorate by Rhodes University in 1954. Subsequent to his involvement in the Joint Councils Movement, he was a founder member and later Vice President of the SAIRR. He was a member of the AAC, and at various times President of CATA and of the South African Federation of Native Teachers. He was also a prominent Methodist layman.

The Rev Zaccheus R E S Mahabane (1881-1971) started his working life as a teacher at the Moroka Mission (1902-1904), then became a Court Interpreter, after which he entered the Methodist ministry, and was ordained in 1914. In 1919 he was president of the Cape Town branch of the ANC, and later served two periods as President-General of the organization (1924-1927 and 1937-1940); he was also involved with the NEUM. He was a founder member and president of IDAMASA, and attended several International Missionary Conferences.

The Rev Seth M Mokitimi (1904-1971) was also a teacher before he entered the ministry, having taught at Healdtown, and been principal of the Bloemfontein Higher Primary School for one year before he offered for the ministry. In 1931 he went to Fort Hare for theological training, and then spent fifteen years as Chaplain and House Master at Healdtown. After that he was appointed Principal of the Osborn Institution, and subsequently Warden at Bensonvale. Between 1939 and 1957 he travelled overseas to a number of international youth and missionary conferences. He served as President of the Conference in 1963/4, and also as President of the South African Council of Churches.

Dr Don Mtinkulu was a teacher in Natal, notably at Adams College until 1957, after which he took up an appointment at Fort Hare. During the time he was in Natal, he was President of the Natal Native Teachers' Association Congress. He served on the Board of African Education from 1953 to 1958. Some time after that he left the country, and is presently a lecturer at Renison College, Kitchener, Ontario.

Dr Jacob M Nhlapo (? - 1957) originally taught at Moroka Mission under Dr James Moroka, and then in the 1940's became Principal, first of the Wilberforce Institution in Evaton (run by the African Methodist Episcopal Church), and then of the Boitshoko Institution. After a year as a visiting lecturer at Selly Oak College, Birmingham, England, he gave up teaching, and in 1953 became editor of Bantu World. He was an active member of the ANC Youth League, and at one time a member of the Executive Committee of the ANC. He was a member of the Conference-appointed Kilnerton Committee from 1951 to 1952 and from 1955 to 1957, and of the Boitshoko Committee from 1955 to 1957.

Dr William Nkomo (1914-1972) was a medical doctor in Pretoria. He was a member of the ANC until his expulsion from that organization in 1955, following his criticism of ANC action on the schools' boycott. He was elected to the Council of the SAIRR in 1962, and President in 1971, but died after only two months in office. He was an active layman in the Methodist Church, and from 1953 in the Moral Re-Armament Movement as well. He was a member of the Board of African Education from 1947 to 1966, and of the Kilnerton Committee from 1949 to 1970, when it was apparently disbanded.

The Rev Stanley G Pitts served as Chaplain to the South African Forces during the Second World War, and on his return to South Africa was appointed as Secretary of the Christian Council. In 1950, he took up the post of Governor at Healdtown, where he remained for fifteen years. He moved from Healdtown to Johannesburg, to succeed Dr J B Webb as minister at the Methodist Central Hall in Johannesburg. He was Secretary and Convenor of the Board of African Education from 1950 to 1980, and President of the Conference in 1963/4 and 1972/3.

The Rev Herbert Rist (1905-1975) came to South Africa in 1926, and was deeply involved in education and "mission work" for all of his ministry, serving at Kamastone, Kilnerton, and then as Chairman of the Clarkebury District from 1949 to 1961, during which time he was stationed in Umtata, and later at Shawbury. He was General Missionary Secretary from 1962-1968, and President of the Conference in 1953.

The Rev Dr Joseph B Webb (1902-1972) was born in Queenstown, but spent nearly all his life in the Transvaal. He entered the ministry in 1922, became a member of Conference in 1935, and served as President of the Conference in 1949/50, 1954/5 and 1961/2. As Chairman of the Transvaal District, he served on the Kilnerton Committee and the Boitshoko Committee, as well as on the Board of African Education. In 1951 he was elected as one of the Vice Presidents of the World Methodist Conference. He was minister at the Methodist Central Hall in Johannesburg from 1940 until his retirement in 1964.

APPENDIX C

STATEMENT ON CHRISTIAN NATIONAL EDUCATION, 1949

(Issued by the Conference of the MCSA)

The Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa, having received the Report of the policy of the Instituut vir Christelike Nasionale Onderwys, resolves as follows:-

1. This Conference welcomes the publicity that has been given to the prime importance of the inculcation of Christian principles in the education of our children in this country.
2. It believes that Christian truth transcends national and denominational borders, and that it is summed up in the teaching of our Lord as contained in the New Testament.
3. It holds that the prime responsibility for religious instruction of the child rests with the parents and urges all parents to become as well-equipped as possible for this important and vital responsibility. Through the Sunday School and Youth Agencies of the Church it pledges itself to co-operate in this task to the best of its ability. It draws attention once again to the urgency of a trained and informed teaching personnel in all its Sunday Schools and to the existence of the Tutorial Department now functioning under the Youth Department.
4. It holds the education of the child should be designed to equip him for a full-orbed Christian citizenship. To this end the child should be taught to view South African culture and history against the background of Western civilisation and world history.
5. Further, in our State Schools, specifically religious education should be given according to a provided and agreed syllabus, by specially trained experts who shall be appointed by the Departments concerned and who shall be acceptable to the parents; always provided that those parents who do not wish their children to be so instructed shall have the right to ask for their withdrawal from scriptural instruction.

6. While this Conference regards it as most desirable that teachers in all schools, colleges and universities should be imbued with the high vocational ideas and Christian principles, it cannot endorse any kind of credal test being applied to teachers as a sine qua non of their appointment. Here, again, the Conference urges upon the Church the necessity of encouraging suitable young men and women to enter the teaching profession.

7. The Conference finds itself in strong opposition to any attitude which equates the word Christian either with any denominational interpretation of it, or with any purely national expression of it.

8. This Conference deplores the continued policy of segregating the children of South Africa into different educational camps according to the home language, which is to be determined in the last instance by state officials. It feels that the accepted policy of bilingualism which is part and parcel of the "Grondwet" of the Union of South Africa, should be fully carried out in the field of education. This will involve a return to the completely bilingual school with parallel classes or dual-medium or both. Unilingual schools, in its opinion, are directly contrary to the intention of the "Grondwet".

9. Conference adheres to its policy as an inter-racial body, and claims for the African, Coloured and Indian community the same rights and privileges of education as those accorded to the European community. In particular it urges that primary education, at least, be made available to all children in this country, as soon as this can possibly be done.

(Conference. Minutes, 1949:151-152)

APPENDIX D

RESOLUTION ON THE REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
ON NATIVE EDUCATION, 1952

(Passed by the 1952 Conference of the MCSA)

The Conference endorses the findings of the National Conference of the Institute of Race Relations convened to study the Report of the Native Education Commission.

The Conference appreciates the scope and thoroughness of the Report of the Government Commission, especially in its analysis of the present state of African education, and recognises the validity of some of its criticisms of the present system.

The Conference further notes with satisfaction the Commission's recognition of the urgent need for the rapid expansion of educational facilities for the African people and the necessity for a Christian background. It also notes the recognition of the need of increased opportunities for the African to play a greater part in the direction and administration of education, but feels that educated Africans have the ability for even more responsibility, not only in education but in other fields of public service.

The Conference, while recognising that education must inevitably take social economic considerations into account, cannot accept these as limiting the ultimate aim of education, which must be concerned with the development of the whole human personality, and the freeing of the human spirit for the purposes of God in His world. The Christian Church can never see man as a mere means to an end, nor education as a preparation for a pre-conceived order of society.

The guiding principles and aims of Native education must be the same as those for any other racial group. These are, to discover and develop the latent ability or natural capacity of people of all ages so that they may become good Christians and therefore useful members of the community and nation. It should be the aim of all responsible for education - Church, State and People - that every child shall have the opportunity of receiving sound education up to the maximum of his capacity for receiving it.

The Conference therefore cannot accept the recommendation of the Commission for the gradual abolition of missionary direction and participation in education. The Church regards this as essential to safeguard Christian faith and life.

The Conference is convinced that while two-thirds of the children of school-going age are still unprovided for, the aim of the Government should be to meet this need and to continue to support Missionary enterprise, without differentiation between Government and State-aided Schools, either in the provision of grants or in the treatment of teachers employed.

The Conference disagrees emphatically with the Commission's recommendation for the overall control of education by a sub-department of a Division of Bantu Affairs. The Conference believes that the African people are an integral part of the South African Community. The proposed Division would create a state within a state separating the African people and their education from the common life of the country. All education should be the responsibility of existing Education Departments.

The Conference recognises that increased educational facilities will involve considerable Government expenditure, but cannot accept the principle of differentiation in taxation; future developments should be financed from General Revenue.

(Conference. Minutes, 1952:104-105)

APPENDIX E

PUBLIC STATEMENT ON BANTU EDUCATION, 1954

(Issued by the 1954 Conference of the MCSA)

The Conference resolves to publish the following Official Statement of our Church on the Bantu Education Act:-

1. The Methodist Church of South Africa emphatically declares its opposition to the policy underlying Bantu Education as expounded by the Minister of Native Affairs in his policy speech in the Senate on June 7th, 1954. A policy which in effect aims at conditioning the African people to a predetermined position of subordination in the State is incompatible with the Christian principles for which the Church stands.

2. Nevertheless, in order to provide for the immediate educational needs of the African people, the Church feels compelled to relinquish control of its schools to the State and to continue to exercise a Christian influence wherever possible.

3. Since the regulations and syllabuses have not yet been published, the Church must safeguard itself by limiting its agreements with the State to an experimental period.

4. Subject to the conclusion of satisfactory agreements with the State, the Conference resolves as follows:-

- i. Training Colleges. Since the Church is debarred from training teachers, such of our Training Colleges as are not required for other Church purposes shall be leased to the State.
- ii. Hostels. The Church shall continue to control its own hostels.
- iii. Primary and Secondary Schools. Since it will be impossible to maintain our primary and secondary schools on a reduced subsidy, the Church is forced to relinquish control to the State.
- iv. Land and Buildings. The land and buildings required by the State for Educational purposes shall be leased and not sold.

(Conference. Minutes, 1954:102)

APPENDIX F

I. LIST OF METHODIST INSTITUTIONS VISITED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE EISELEN COMMISSION

Boschrand Methodist Mission School, Kroonstad
 Clarkebury Institution, Engcobo
 Davies Primary Methodist Mission School, Butterworth
 East Cliff Location Methodist Primary School, East London
 Healdtown Institution, Fort Beaufort
 Holfontein Wesleyan School, Kroonstad
 Indaleni Methodist Institution, Richmond
 Lavisa Higher Primary Methodist Mission School, Butterworth
 Moroka Training Schools, Thaba'Nchu
 Shawbury Methodist Institution, Qumbu

II. LIST OF WITNESSES KNOWN TO BE MEMBERS OF THE MCSA

Mr W G Caley, Inspector of Schools, Transkei
 Mr R Cingo, Principal, United Bantu School, Kroonstad
 Mrs Anne Cook, Training School, Kilnerton
 Mr Dale, Principal, Training School, Healdtown
 Prof D P Dent, Principal, S A Native College, Fort Hare
 Mr J H Dugard, Inspector of Schools, Umtata
 Rev D P Dugmore, Governor, Boitshoko Methodist Institution,
 Ventersdorp
 Rev E W Grant, Principal, Healdtown Institution
 Mr K B Hartshorne, Principal, Training School, Kilnerton
 Mr J T Heyns, Principal, Moroka Methodist Mission School,
 Thaba'Nchu
 Mr N Honono, Principal, Secondary School, Idutywa
 Mr C Jackson, Acting Principal, Training School, Kilnerton
 Rev E E Kumalo, Sophiatown
 Rev E E Kuzwayo, Dundee
 Mr J M Lekgetha, Supervisor of Schools, Potchefstroom
 Rev J M Letlabika, Ventersdorp
 Rev Z R Mahabane, Kroonstad
 Dr W J G Mears, Secretary of Native Affairs
 MCSA delegation comprising Revs E W Grant, C C Harris, J W Hunt,
 S M Mokitimi, and J C Mvusi
 Rev W S Michell, Heilbron
 Dr J S Moroka, Thaba'Nchu
 Mr J M Nhlapo, Principal, Boitshoko Methodist High School,
 Ventersdorp
 Rev I N Nyembezi, Dundee
 Mr J L Omond, Inspector of Schools, Kokstad
 Rev K Seeby, Bizana Methodist Mission, Transkei
 Mr G W Tabor, Municipal Native Affairs Department, Johannesburg
 Rev D C Thompson, Chairman, Witwatersrand Mental Health Society

(Lists compiled from the Eiselen Commission Report (UG53-1951), and
 UCT Archives files BC 282)

APPENDIX G

QUESTIONNAIRE ON NATIVE EDUCATION

(Drawn up by the Commission to Inquire into Native Education, 1949)

1. What do you consider should be the guiding principles and aims of Native education?
2. Is it correct to regard the Native as a separate and independent race?
3. What do you understand by the "racial characteristics" of the Native?
4. What are the special qualities and aptitudes of the Native?
5. In what way has the social heritage of the Native been determined by the characteristics referred to above?
6. What do you consider the most important changes taking place in the social conditions of the Native?
7. In terms of your answers to questions 1-6, please give seriatim, your views on the manner in which there [sic] factors should determine the principles and objectives of Native education.
8. Referring to Item 2 of the terms of reference, what do you understand by the "future careers" of the Native in South Africa?
9. (1) What do you consider the chief defects of the the present system of -
 - (a) primary schools;
 - (b) secondary schools;
 - (c) industrial schools;
 - (d) teacher training colleges; and
 - (e) university training?
- (2) What measures do you suggest for effecting the necessary changes with special reference to the content and form of the syllabuses?
- (3) To what extent do these measures agree with the general principles you have recommended in answers to questions 1-7 above?

10. What, in your opinion, should be the place and nature of religious education in the curriculum?
11. What, in your opinion, should be the place and nature of manual training in Native schools, especially with regard to -
- (1) the use the Native, after leaving school, makes of his manual training; and
 - (2) the transfer of skills acquired in school to the Native community?

12. Do you regard the organization of the present -

- (1) primary schools
- (2) secondary schools;
- (3) industrial schools;
- (4) teacher training colleges;
- (5) university training

as satisfactory from the viewpoint of -

- (a) selection and admission of pupils;
- (b) co-ordination of schools;
- (c) duration of complete school courses;
- (d) the role which these courses are called upon to play in the life of the Native;
- (e) school attendance;
- (f) the school calendar;
- (g) examinations;
- (h) qualifications, race and sex of teachers;
- (i) methods;
- (j) inspection;
- (k) boarding facilities.

13. Is the administration of the present -

- (1) primary schools;
- (2) secondary schools;
- (3) industrial schools;
- (4) teacher training colleges; and
- (5) university training

satisfactory considered from the viewpoint of -

- (a) the establishment of schools;
- (b) the effective distribution of schools;
- (c) local control of schools;
- (d) control of teachers (conditions of service and discipline);
- (e) provision of school requisites;
- (f) buildings;
- (g) fees;
- (h) procedure for the payment of teachers.

14. What is your opinion concerning the control of schools by the provincial education departments, bearing in mind -

- (1) the desirability or otherwise of uniformity of practice, regulations and syllabuses;
- (2) the geographic and ethnic distribution of the Native peoples;
- (3) differences between the provinces in respect of pensions, leave privileges, school requisites, etc.

15. What are your views as to the basis on which Native education should be financed, having regard to the share which the Administration (Union and Provincial), the churches or missionary societies, and the Native himself should have therein?

16. What are your views concerning the following points which may have been dealt with incidentally under previous headings, but which seem to merit specific attentions -

- (1) Adult education.
- (2) The desirability of differentiating between the education given in different areas (Native reserves, rural areas and urban areas).
- (3) The education and preparation of chiefs and leaders.
- (4) Continuation study facilities for teachers, including libraries.
- (5) The desirability of differentiating Government, community, tribal and church schools in regard to subsidies.
- (6) Compulsory education in general or in specified areas.
- (7) The training of Natives to occupy responsible positions in their own communities.
- (8) The co-ordination of work of an educational nature carried out by State departments (e.g. Health, Native Affairs, Social Welfare, Justice).
- (9) The education of leaders and the task of the university in this respect.
- (10) The use of the mother tongue as medium of instruction.
- (11) The future role of Native languages in education and in the community.
- (12) The possible grouping or amalgamation of Native languages.
- (13) The place of the official languages in the Native school curriculum.
- (14) The relapse into illiteracy - its incidence and prevention.

17. Any other matters you wish to raise.

APPENDIX H

REPLIES OF THE MCSA DEPUTATION TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE SENT OUT BY THE COMMISSION TO INQUIRE INTO NATIVE EDUCATION

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA has been engaged in NATIVE EDUCATION for over a century. This work was started by the early Missionaries, without Government assistance. As schools became more numerous Government aid on a slowly increasing scale was provided, until in 1948 the Methodist church was co-operating with the various Education Departments in:

1312 PRIMARY SCHOOLS with 3546 Teachers and 168,708 Scholars and 26 HIGH, SECONDARY, TRAINING or INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS with 270 Teachers and 7,062 Scholars.

QUESTION 1.

The guiding principles and aims of Native Education are the same as for any racial group. These are to discover and develop latent ability or natural capacity of people of all ages so that they may become good Christian and therefore useful members of the Community and Nation. Th Church has found the African people most responsive to education and capable of steady development. Accordingly it has been necessary to augment and adjust the curriculum offered from its earliest and simplest forms to that which approximated the best standards of education in this modern age. While it is true that only a percentage of African children receives some education in schools, it is also true that all are affected in greater or lesser degree by the mere contact with Western Civilization. It should be the aim of all responsible for education, Church, State and People, that every child shall have an opportunity of receiving sound education up to the maximum of his capacity for receiving it.

QUESTION 2.

"A Separate and Independent race". All human beings belong to the Family of God. There are many races with differing physical external appearance which social custom has come to regard as "separate" races. Among the Africans themselves there exist these differences of colour of skin and appearance of the hair etc., but this question (No. 2) appears to group them as one. In some cases tribal groups differ so widely that even in language they have little in common. In this multi-racial land there is no independent race, but each racial group is inter-dependent upon the others.

QUESTION 3.

We note again the underlying fallacy that all Africans have the same characteristics. If the term "Racial characteristics" means the external physical appearance mentioned in the previous answer, then it should be noted that this is purely superficial. But if characteristics of the mind and spirit are meant, then it seems obvious that the Africans of the Union must show such attitudes as grew out of their earlier social history with the changes wrought by their later environment. With so many differing tribal groups and the disruptive impact and great influence of industry and economic and social life upon the tribes, it is as difficult, today, to particularise "racial characteristics" of the Native as it is to do this for any Western race.

QUESTION 4.

"Special qualities and aptitudes" are terms which are difficult to define. They are largely individual and grow out of experience and opportunity. As they are conditioned very largely by such factors as isolation, heritage and the environment in which an individual or a group finds itself, the characteristics of today may not be the characteristics of tomorrow. In any attempt to define the Native's environment it must be understood, in general, that for the last hundred years European activities have created a new environment for the African. First the coming of an alien civilization, then its expansion and finally the industrialization of the country has made it impossible for the Native to live in isolation from the outside world whether from his own violation [sic] or because of artificially erected barriers. The relative suddenness of the change is disturbing. Changes that normally take hundreds of years have been brought about in a generation. The Native is being called upon to leap out of the prehistoric into the twentieth century in one jump. These factors are constantly changing and reshaping general racial qualities and aptitudes. The change from collectivism of outlook to that of the individual makes such qualities and aptitudes to a large extent unpredictable.

QUESTION 5.

"Social heritage" and "characteristics" react upon one another. Africans are grouped not only in tribal areas but the detribalised people in vast numbers know no other home except that found in the urban and peri-urban areas. Thus both the tribal common life and the disruptive forces of economic pressure have played parts in producing the present results.

QUESTION 6.

- (a) The disintegration of tribal life affecting land, labour, industry and living standards.
- (b) The entry of Africans into industry.
- (c) The emergence of a new type in the educated and cultured African. This group is large and is rapidly growing and should be found a worthy place in national life.

QUESTION 7.

Based on the broad principle that Education develops natural ability, a primary objective of Native Education should be to make literate all Africans. The State should continue to co-operate with the Churches in this endeavour and together provide the additional facilities as required. In addition to the subjects taught at present, an increasing number of trades and skills and professions and arts should be taught and opportunities should be found for the employment of such students on the completion of their courses. Account should be taken of the legitimate aspirations of the Africans themselves in all these matters.

QUESTION 8.

In relation to the population of nearly eight million African people (7,805,515 in 1946) and approximately two million Europeans, there exists scope for all types of work. Africans should be able to supply all services for a normal society. Accordingly the scope of Native Education should be widened from time to time to meet all requirements.

QUESTION 9.

1. The system of Native Education, having followed the European plan, has some of the defects discerned in the latter; in particular pre-occupation with examination results. This is to be noted in its lack of success in relating school life and work to that of the home. This applies in both Primary and post-Primary schools. Other grave defects are that accommodation, equipment and staffing are inadequate.
2. Part of the remedy lies in the provision of funds for the erection of more and suitable buildings and the supply of necessary equipment. Adjustment could be made to the syllabus of rural schools giving an agricultural bias, on the assumption that there is sufficient land to cultivate for each family or such land will be provided. The emphasis in urban areas will be different and should provide training for a life in such circumstances, for example, the acquiring of technical skills in Industry and Commerce. The way in which these subjects are taught depends very largely upon the type of teacher in the school and the practical turn which he can give to the subjects taught.

QUESTION 10.

We consider that it is of first importance that Education should be Christian. Teachers should receive training in the teaching of Religious Instruction, and more importance should be placed on the life and character of the Teacher as a practising Christian. These two things should combine to make Religious Instruction a subject which can be effectively taught without the intrusion of the teacher's personal dogmatic views. An agreed syllabus of Religious Instruction should be used in all schools, and should be

subject to examination. The syllabus of the Cape Province (1945) is considered a suitable course. The School should be opened with a short religious service and later in the morning further time should be given for the religious instruction of all scholars in all schools.

QUESTION 11.

Manual training in schools should have the effect of stressing the dignity of labour. It does not seem possible to provide sufficient time in the ordinary school day to give specialised training in manual work. Technical schools for all types of work should be further developed for this. But as far as possible, from Std. 2 upward some gardening or domestic work, or carpentry, or the like, should be part of the courses provided in all schools.

QUESTION 12.

The organisation of the present schools in all groups and on the special aspects questioned, seems to be generally satisfactory. It is the result of constant adjustment through the years to meet changing needs and such adaption must continue. Of more immediate importance is a change of policy which can authorise Missionary Bodies, within their own sphere of influence and within the five mile radius, to provide feeder schools for very young children who have long distances to walk to school at present. Consideration should also be given to the difficult matter of compulsory attendance within urban areas.

QUESTION 13.

(a & b) The establishment and distribution of schools below university standard, has been left largely to the initiative of the Missionary Bodies, aided, in recent years, by the various Provincial Education Departments. This has carried the advantage of placing the school where the need has been most clamant, but the disadvantage of not being able fully to cope with rapidly growing school population.

(c) Much of the best work in the control of schools has been done by School Managers alone. School Committees are difficult bodies to operate successfully in rural areas. But there is much to be said for an effective Committee working in harmony with the School Manager or School Board.

(d) The Ordinances of the Provinces differ in this matter. Security of tenure should be satisfactory for the teacher. Cognisance should be taken of the fact that the regulations of some of the Provincial Departments of Education render it difficult to dispense with the services of a teacher whose standards of conduct are unsatisfactory.

(e) The establishment of Provincial Requisite Stores should be undertaken in all the Provinces.

(f) Money should be provided for new buildings and Rent Grants made available for existing buildings used for school purposes.

(g) Education should be free up to Matriculation standard.

(h) The present procedure is satisfactory.

QUESTION 14.

The work of the Union Advisory Board should continue and its work of co-ordination expanded where possible.

QUESTION 15.

The Union Government should provide funds as required by the Provinces from the General Revenue of the Country as is done for other racial groups. The Missions, with the assistance of the local African people, have provided Buildings etc. but the growing need calls for more generous treatment in the form of greater financial aid from Union Government Funds.

QUESTION 16.

(1) Adult Education should be organised on a wide scale not only to combat general illiteracy but also to make more efficient those who wish to improve their present qualifications for their work and to play a more effective part in the community.

(2) As far as possible education should be adapted to the needs of the various areas. The position is complicated however by the fact that many children migrate from the rural areas to friends and relatives in urban areas.

(3) Chiefs should be educated with other students and not in separate schools. Ability for leadership emerges through normal subjects.

(4) Refreshers[sic] Courses are necessary to maintain accuracy of information and soundness of technique, particularly for teachers trained some years back.

(5) So much remains to be done before all African children are brought to the schools that all types of schools should be granted subsidy and should be treated on the same basis of grant in each group.

(6) The desire for education is found everywhere and the aim should be that no-one is denied the opportunity. In areas where Compulsory Education is practicable it should be introduced as soon as possible.

(7)(8) The training of Africans for responsible posts should be proceeded with and developed by more co-ordinated preliminary instruction.

(9) As stated under (3) Leaders will emerge in normal ways. But the object of giving specialised training is a laudable one and the University can provide through relevant training the foundations of good leadership.

(10) The mother tongue should be used in the lower standards, but as soon as possible an official language should be used to fit the student for modern conditions of life.

(11) Even though the Native language is not used as a medium of instruction it must occupy an important place in the curriculum as it will continue to be not only the common form of communication between the African people but the basis of their culture.

(12) Amalgamation of language in course of time would seem to be a natural process and should be directed by Educationalists with a knowledge of the various vernacular languages.

(13) The place of the official languages is recognised and it is essential that they should be retained in the school curriculum.

(14) The Adult Education plan, together with the provision of library facilities, community centres, cinema shows of suitable type, would contribute to this end.

QUESTION 17.

[No reply given to this question.]

(BC 282: Memo 92)

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Archival Sources and Primary Materials

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See note in Preface on the location of MCSA Archives.

The following abbreviations have been used to identify the location of material consulted:

CL: Cory Library, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

TD: Transvaal District Office, Central Methodist Church, Johannesburg.

BAE: Board of African Education Minutes (In the possession of the present Convenor of the Board of Education, the Rev Jack Scholtz).

Conference: Minutes of the Annual Conference of the MCSA (These are printed and are readily available at the State Deposit Libraries, the Cory Library and elsewhere).

British Methodist Church Archives

Some of these records are in the process of being transferred from the Methodist Church Overseas Division in London to the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London.

MMS: Documents consulted at SOAS.

State Archives, Pretoria

BNE: Minutes of the Union Advisory Board on Native Education.

UOD E53/71: Papers of the Eiselen Commission.

University of Cape Town Archives

BC 282: Professor Murray's papers relating to the Eiselen Commission.

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